



CAREFREE PATH OF DREAMS

BOOK 03

The Plagiarist

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

Carefree Path of Dreams

(逍遙夢路)

by

The Plagiarist

(文抄公)

Synopsis

This is the story of a boy who lived a secluded life in the mountains, tending his farm, rearing his fish, and dreaming his dreams. Eh? Did I suddenly conquer all worlds and become the big boss? Or am I still in a dream?

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Chapter 201: Traces of Life

"Brother, we cannot proceed further!"

Somewhere not far from the icy plains, two small figures were trotting along.

The larger figure was a boy wearing an animal's hide as a coat. He was carrying a bamboo basket and his shoes were already torn. His face was full of determination. "If we don't enter the icy gorge, how can we obtain enough herbs to cure father's illness? Don't forget that we have to give our contribution to the city master as well!"

"It's too dangerous out there. It's uncharted territories filled with poisonous insects and ferocious beasts, and they're all out to kill you!"

A little girl was pulling on his arm, and her big eyes welled up with tears.

"LEt go!"

The young boy was decided as he licked his lips.

"I'm not letting go!"

The little girl persisted. As the girl pestered her for a while longer, the young boy could no longer hold it in. As he waved his arm away, the little girl fell to the ground.

"Of course I know about the dangers in the icy gorge. But if we don't hand in our contribution, how will our family be allowed to continue living in the village?!"

The young boy continued. "Without the protection from the array in the village, we will all die!"

"Boohoo..."

The little girl knew this fact as well. She sat on the floor and started to wail.

"Ah Xian, don't worry. I have a rather good understanding of the Death Plains. Furthermore, I know a little martial arts, and I am rather confident about it!"

The young boy comforted the little girl. As his expression changed, he was prepared to journey into the unknown.

However, at this moment, he stopped in his tracks.

He could see a huge black shadow slowly emerging from the woods.

It was a white giant tiger from the mountains, and the black stripes on it resembled chains, giving it a mysterious feel.

"Roar! Roar!"

As it leapt, it looked around in its vicinity. The young boy and little girl froze in their positions; they were too fearful to do anything.

'It's... It's too powerful...'

The young boy's legs turned jelly, and he heard a voice from inside of him. "This is only the boundary and there is already such an animal that I am unable to do anything about. How scary is the icy plains? No wonder the village forbade us to leave our houses after sunset and made us give up a portion of contribution every year to maintain the array..."

"Ta! Ta! Ta! Ta!"

As the giant tiger approached, the young boy started to sweat profusely. He clenched his teeth and was unable to speak a single word.

"Kekekeke!"

Although he could still stand, the little girl beside him was chattering her teeth, and there was a foul smell of urine from her legs.

At this point in time, the demonic white tiger bent over,

revealing a person's silhouette. It opened its mouth and blabbered a few weird words.

Although no one could understand it, soon after it spoke, the tense atmosphere was no more.

It was as though the seasons had changed from winter to spring. The fearful thought of a ferocious tiger was long gone.

"Lord!"

Anyone who was able to tame such a ferocious beast had to be a highly skilled martial artist. With that, the young boy quickly greeted him respectfully.

"Eh? Who are you people?"

Hearing the young boy speak, Fang Yuan's eyebrows twitched.

This was not the language they used on the mainland. Instead, it sounded similar to the common language spoken in Da Qian Empire!

Why could he speak the Da Qian language?

He had already practised it before in Yang Fan's dream world.

However, even if he did not learn it before, it was still alright. To a dream master, it was only a matter of one dream-accessing opportunity to learn a foreign language quickly.

"I am a villager from the nearby Rock Village, and my name is Yu Jian. This is my younger sister, Ah Xian!"

Yu Jian hurriedly took a bow and stuttered.

"Rock Village?"

The lord on the back of the tiger became curious. "Are there many people here? Where are they?"

Yu Jian started to become nervous and stutter even more.

After his explanation, Fang Yuan finally understood.

'There are people living nearby, and they are split into many different villages. At the heart of all the villages is the Descending Star City!'

'Furthermore, the way he speaks and his mannerism are alike to the people in Da Qian Empire. Could these people have migrated from there?'

Below, the young boy Yu Jian was secretly examining this lord.

'He is so well-dressed! He must be an important person from the city!'

From the young boy's experience, he only had the chance to interact with the people in his village. Descending Star City was the centre of the entire world to him. He would never know how huge the outside world would be.

"Bring me to your village!"

Fang Yuan thought for a moment before directly requesting him.

Seeing the young boy hesitate for a while, he continued. "Were you preparing to pluck herbs with the bamboo basket and the hoe? I shall hire you as my guide, and this is your remuneration!"

As he said, he waved his hand. A special flower with pure white petals and a red hue in the centre of it appeared and slowly drifted to the ground.

"Snow Petal Red Pistil Flower?"

Yu Jian was shocked. He quickly but carefully picked up the flower with both his hands and was left speechless.

Although this was something Fang Yuan had casually plucked, it was hope for his entire family!

"Yes, lord! I'll bring you there right away!"

He rubbed his tears from his eyes, kept the flower properly and pulled his sister together to bow and pay their respects to Fang Yuan.

The little girl was lost for a moment. However, she was sure that her brother no longer needed to risk his life. She let out a long sigh and her eyes examined the giant tiger with curiosity.

"Sorry to trouble you, you can go now!"

Fang Yuan took out a piece of roasted meat and shoved it in the Frost Sword Toothed Tiger's mouth before chasing it away.

To Fang Yuan, a spiritual beast who had not broken through the Elemental Gathering Stage could at most be a form of transportation for him.

Furthermore, this beast would attract too much attention. Since he had already arrived at a place with people, it was better to let it go.

"Wuuuuu!"

As the Frost Sword Toothed Tiger swallowed the roasted meat, it reluctantly rubbed its head in Fang Yuan's palms. Finally, under Fang Yuan's hypnotisation, it grunted before returning to the icy plains and disappeared after a while.

"Lord, is that your spiritual beast?"

Yu Jian witnessed the scene and was full of envy.

"Spiritual beast? If you say so, but I did not raise it up. I only picked it up along the way..."

Fang Yuan smiled and shook his head as he looked at the young boy wearing the beast hide.

This boy was too inexperienced, but he already had the cultivation of a 5th Gate martial artist, and it was not too bad.

"Please lead the way!"

At this point, he had no more reservations. He started a casual conversation with the young boy and tried to learn the way he spoke.

After all, his boy did not owe him anything, and it would be too much for Fang Yuan to read his mind and memories for no good reason.

Furthermore, this young boy was inexperienced and he might not know much.

Yu Jian was leading the way in front. Not long after, a simple village appeared in front of him.

It was really simple!

Fang Yuan was speechless. The village which they spoke about was just a piece of flat land and a few round structures built together. It appeared sturdy, and almost half of it was underground.

This type of construction would shield them from the unforgiving coldness, and the sturdiness allowed it to withstand normal threats.

Of course, aesthetic wise, they could not ask for too much.

In fact, it was normal to most villagers to be constantly putting their lives at risks. Why would they care how pleasing the structure would look?

Fang Yuan noticed something different in the surroundings of the village. "Spiritual inscriptions? No... This is... a spiritual array! Although simple, this is indeed a spiritual array! Who would've thought that there would be a spiritual array master here!"

"Lord?"

It could be because Fang Yuan was staring for too long. Yu Jian anxiously asked Fang Yuan. "This is the protective array of our village. Is there any problem with it?"

"Who placed this array here?"

Fang Yuan asked directly.

"Of course it's the spiritual array master from Descending Star

City!"

Although it felt a little weird, Yu Jian answered him honestly. "Every year, we have to contribute huge amounts of staples, spiritual medicine and beasts' hides to Descending Star City, in exchange for the spiritual array masters' arrival to maintain this Rock Array. With it, we can repel wild and fierce beasts at night, and it can even shield us from the cold as well. If we do not contribute enough, the entire village would be exterminated..."

As he said the last few words, he clenched his fists with determination in his eyes. "I must become part of the city so that I can bring sister and Father along with me to enjoy a good life there!"

"Descending Star City?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin. "I must pay a visit to that place!"

The villagers of Rock Village had started to notice them. After a commotion, a weak and old man carried a smoking pot and walked out.

"Yu Jian, go home! Be careful not to catch the disease die in the icy plains!"

The old man appeared kind. Seeing that Yu Jian was safe and sound, he heaved a sigh of relief and started to advise him. "It's just a poison! There must be a cure. Don't worry about this year's contribution. If we gather all that we have together, I'm sure it will be enough!"

"Village head..."

Yu Jian's eyes welled up with tears. Hurriedly, he retrieved the Snow Petal Red Pistil Flower from his basket. "This is a gift from this lord. I have fulfilled my family's contribution this year..."

"Keke!"

The old village head looked at it and was shocked. "To find a

flower of such maturity, I'm afraid it's only possible in the icy plains! Only a petal of this flower would be enough to treat your father's poison!"

He clenched his smoking pot and gave Fang Yuan a bow. "Thank you for saving our lives. I am Shi Ying, the village head of this small village. Lord, did you come from Descending Star City?"

"Descending Star City? No..."

Fang Yuan shook his head.

He was now clear that Descending Star City was like the capital of this region.

The villages in the vicinity had to depend on it for their survival. Of course, in the process, they were being taken advantage of.

With the protection from the city, the centre of the city would be the safest place. Therefore, it was the ultimate lifetime goal for every villager to make it there.

Seeing the suspicious look on the old village head's face, Fang Yuan laughed, before casually coming up with a story in which he followed his master from young, and had lived his life on the icy plains like a nomad.

"Lord, are you intending to go to Descending Star Country?"

Hearing Fang Yuan's request, Village Head Shi let down his guard as he laughed heartily. "This is nothing much... What a coincidence! Tomorrow, our village would be forming a caravan to head towards Descending Star Country. It'll be on the way!"

In reality, he had planned it extremely well.

Since Fang Yuan was hard to predict, and even he himself could not tell how highly skilled Fang Yuan was, then he must be really highly skilled.

These villagers only had to show him the way, and they could get free protection from him. It was a win-win situation and a

profitable agreement!

Chapter 202: Ghosts

On the flat land, a small caravan was trotting along an arduous journey.

Based on what Yu Jian had said, the environment around the region here was harsh. Occasionally, there might be ice storms, and temperatures would drop drastically at night. Wild beasts native to the icy plains might even appear, and without the protection from the spiritual array, it would be a daunting task for them to even survive.

The village would form the caravan on a regular basis and head towards Descending Star Country. Using large amounts of low-quality staples, they were able to trade for top quality salt, weapon, and necessities they need for their survival.

Of course, the largest caravan would be the one escorting the contribution to the spiritual array master in Descending Star Country for him to continue to maintain the array.

It was a pity that the most experienced and respectable person in the village was Village Head Shi. In reality, he was also rather inexperienced and could only boast about his travels and experiences in Descending Star Country when he was younger. To Fang Yuan, this was considered nothing worthy.

"Descending Star Country is just ahead. We will reach there after 8 nightfalls!"

Among the caravan, Yu Jian was extremely excited.

The caravan consisted of many people, and there were many full sacks on the cart. The animal pulling the cart along was a huge black boar. It had a hump on its back and it was covered in blubber.

Based on what Yu Jian had said, the 'Black Peak Boar' was extremely common here. It was the most widely used ride and its

thick blubber allowed it to withstand the cold. It could even last a few days without food due to its fatty reserves. Furthermore, it ate anything that was given to him. Most importantly, it was a delicacy.

As he described, the young boy swallowed his saliva; his mind was filled with the fragrant taste of roasted meat.

Fang Yuan had a cart to himself. He was one of the few who did not have to walk on his feet. Looking at the Black Peak Boar, he was speechless.

To serve its whole life, and to end up at a delicacy, it was a selfless animal.

"Eh? This caravan is too quiet!"

The well-built guard who was leading the villagers was Li Hu. He was 7-feet tall and was a proud man. He draped a tiger's hide around him and held a Hundred Casted Knife. After walking around, he commented.

The region around Descending Star Country was not a safe place to be. As long as it was beyond the lake which surrounded the city, anything could happen here and the soldiers of the city would not care.

Furthermore, the harsh environment produced many hardy beasts native to the region. These were the best type of animals for the caravan to hunt.

Previously, in the many times they had escorted the goods, even with the accompany of villagers from other villages, there were always being ambushed, which caused them to lose their goods.

However, this journey was a peaceful one; there was not even an animal in sight.

'This is the power of a skilled martial artist!'

Li Hu looked at Fang Yuan and his eyes were filled with

admiration.

'It's a pity that I'm too old. There is no hope for me in learning martial arts. Also, this lord has not expressed his interest in any of the girls in our village...'

He sighed inside. Suddenly, he saw Yu Jian walking forward to talk to Fang Yuan, and gave a hopeful look.

Perhaps, the entire village's hope was laid on this young boy.

...

"Beasts native to the icy plains? Compared to normal beasts, these beasts have a little spiritual property!"

As his magical will shook, Fang Yuan detected an icy snake laying in ambush nearby. Slowly, Fang Yuan gave off a hint of spiritual aura.

The snake had killed many animals on its way here and was filled with a murderous vibe.

However, just a little spiritual aura from Fang Yuan was able to strike fear in the snake, and it escaped.

Along the way, if not for Fang Yuan who was secretly helping them, this small caravan would have encountered dangers everywhere, and it would be a miracle if anyone here could survive.

"This region is indeed harsh!"

Fang Yuan grabbed a handful of black rice and thought to himself.

This was the main produce of Rock Village. It had an average taste and it felt like grains of sand; dry and tasteless. The only good thing about this rice was that it grew at an exceptional rate and was resistant to cold weather. This was enough for survival in this region.

Furthermore, there were only a few pieces of land near Rock

Village which could support the growth of this rice. It needed constant care and protection, or it would be eaten by wild animals, which would result in a reduced harvest.

In this caravan was almost half of the entire village's stock of black rice.

"Everyone, stay alert!"

Li Hu exclaimed. "We are reaching Red Leaf Village ahead. We have good relations with their village head, and we can request him to let us stay over in their village for the night!"

"It was a peaceful journey this time. If we can make it to the city, we can surely trade for a lot of top quality salt, and over 13 pounds of scrap metal..."

Yu Jian followed the village accountant along the way and slowly learned how to calculate. His eyes were filled with joy.

In the Descending Star Region, every child had to contribute their part to the village. In the face of survival, everyone was equal and there were no priorities given.

"Red Leaf Village?"

Fang Yuan sighed deeply and called for Yu Jian. "You have good relations with their village head?"

"That's right... Red leaf Village is close to Descending Star Village. They have a huge flat and fertile land nearby and their protective array is much stronger than that of Rock Village..."

Yu Jian's eyes were filled with envy. "Our village head had once saved the life of the village head of Red Leaf Village, which laid the foundation for their relationship!"

After these few days, Fang Yuan had a rough understanding of the happenings in this region.

In the Descending Star Region, the land nearer to Descending Star City would be more fertile, and the villages who could occupy

these lands were stronger.

Yu Jian's village was only at the fringe of the region and was considered the poorer villages. On the other hand, Red Leaf Village was considered average. However, there were still in a similar situation whereby they were still taken advantage of by Descending Star City.

Red Leaf Village had gotten its name from the red maple leaf that it produces. This maple leaf was valuable as it was an ingredient to many medical concoctions. Since there was a demand for this leaf in Descending Star City, the villagers would harvest some leaves while they hunt, which helped them become slightly wealthier.

Although they only stayed here for a while, Yu Jian was already full of admiration for Red Leaf Village.

"Lord, look over there! That's the Red Leaf Forest!"

After walking for a distance, Yu Jian pointed to a red forest not far from them and exclaimed with envy.

As Fang Yuan looked over, his expression was weird.

"Wait a moment!"

Li Hu's face started to appear serious as well. "We'll stop here temporarily. Follow me, and we'll check it out!"

"What happened?"

Yu Jian let out a curious look on his face.

"I'm afraid Red Leaf Village has run into some trouble..."

Fang Yuan shook his head. "Look... There's no one attending to the surrounding farms and this Red Leaf Forest... Don't you think it's too peaceful?"

"You're right!"

Yu Jian nodded his head and was stunned. "What... what about the villagers? Where have they gone to?"

"Let's take a look for ourselves and we'll know the answer!"

Fang Yuan walked up and looked at Li Hu. "Let's go!"

"Alright!"

Li Hu nodded his head and was excited.

Although it was mysterious and felt ominous, the fact that this mysterious and highly skilled lord was willing to go with him reassured him.

He called for two other villagers, both of which were martial artists who had obtained inner force, and ordered them to follow Fang Yuan as they walked towards Red Leaf Village.

"Lord, wait for me!"

Yu Jian clenched his teeth and followed them as well.

...

"This is..."

As they approached Red Leaf Village, Li Hu gave an unpleasant look.

Red Leaf Village was originally filled with energy and life, but now, all they could see was blood! There were huge patches of blood everywhere! A rotting stench filled the air and Yu Jian immediately became pale and turned over; he did not dare to look at the mess.

"Human blood?"

Lu Hu bent over and smeared some blood on his finger. There was fear in his voice.

This scene was too horrendous.

"Furthermore... This would mean that there are a lot of people who died. Where are their corpses? Where did their corpses go?"

Quickly, he arrived at the boundary of the village.

The stone walls were covered in moss and there were a few spiritual inscriptions glowing; it was obvious that it had been here for over a year. There was nothing wrong with the protective array.

However, there was no one behind the village!

"I'm Li Hu from Rock Village! Is the village head here?"

Looking at the village which was partially covered with a thin layer of fog, Li Hu clenched his teeth and exclaimed forcefully, but there was no response.

Seeing this, he remained silent. Clenching his teeth, he turned around and left.

"Let's go, don't look back!"

He instructed Yu Jian and the other two villagers as he headed back to where they came from. "Let's continue our journey without any more breaks!"

As he returned to the caravan, Li Hu quickly chased the Black Peak Boar as though it was a crazy dog and they journeyed on.

"What happened?"

Fang Yuan only caught a glimpse of the village and was unsure of many things. The most crucial thing was that there were no signs or clues of murder.

Li Hu's face stoned. After a long while, he finally spoke, and his voice was hoarse. "Death without a corpse, and coupled with the fact that the protective array is still intact, I'm afraid that they have encountered ghosts!"

"Ghosts?!"

Fang Yuan was astonished.

Even though his cultivation had already reached an extreme level, and that he had seen many things before, it was the first time he had heard of the existence of ghosts.

"Lord, you're unaware?"

Li Hu was utterly shocked. "The place which you come from! Are there are no ghosts? That's not possible... Almost every year, there would be a village that would experience such a thing..."

"I've heard of it before but I'm not too sure about it. Tell me more..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his nose and his eyes were filled with curiosity.

"Oh!"

Li Hu was confused and did not bother to press Fang Yuan any further. Instead, he obediently explained it to Fang Yuan. "Ghosts leave no trace as they come and go, and they do not have a physical body. There is a type of... curse!"

"We don't know where it comes from, or where it wants to go. We only know that every time it appears, many people would disappear and it would leave behind many weird things..."

"No matter how strong the martial artists were, or even spiritual array masters, everyone was defenceless against it. However, the weird thing is that it had never happened to Descending Star City before. That is the only place we can take shelter..."

Chapter 203: Spiritual Array

"Ghosts... curse?"

Fang Yuan revealed a mysterious smile. "Interesting! This is really interesting!"

Ghosts were once described in Master Heartless's inheritance and Yang Fan's dream world, but none of them was described like that.

"If it wasn't an extremely strong evil spirit which wiped out Red Leaf Village, then it must be..."

Fang Yuan was deep in thought. Suddenly, he looked at Li Hu and ordered. "We must be on our way to Descending Star City!"

"Yes Lord!"

Even the laziest person would become extremely alert after such a thing happened. After all, everyone would take their lives seriously. For their own safety, it was better to keep a distance from Red Leaf Village.

Due to their continuous journeying, they did not rest much. Instead, they arrived at Descending Star City a day earlier than planned.

"Indeed a spiritual city!"

Looking ahead, he could see the lake surrounding the city.

Although this city, with walls of only 20 feet tall, could not compare with the many huge cities that Fang Yuan had seen before, it was still rather lively. There were even spiritual inscriptions glowing on the city walls! As it swirled around, it gave the impression of a huge array.

"For sturdiness, defence and prosperity..."

Even Fang Yuan could only understand little about the true potential of the entire array around the city.

'It seems that the spiritual array master here had learnt quite a bit from Da Qian Empire, and is quite impressive!'

"Hold it there! Pay the entrance fees!"

As they arrived at the city gates, a row of soldiers stopped the caravan. The leader of the soldiers wore an armour made of an unknown hide, and this was already considered rather luxurious. "We'll count the people and the goods separately. Are you from Rock Village? You should know the rules, right?"

As the leader looked at Fang Yuan, he continued. "A day's worth of tax can only allow you to stay in the city for a day! If you are caught by the soldiers at midnight, it would not be as simple as paying a fine."

"No worries, we know the rules!"

Li Hu smiled and shoved a piece of black ore in the leader's hands. "Please let us pass!"

"I knew it! Everyone from Rock City is beggars..."

The leader frowned as though he was unsatisfied. However, he still kept the black ore and kicked Li Hu harshly. "Hold on to the license and get lost!"

Facing a person of such authority, not just Li Hu, but even Yu Jian shrugged his head, afraid to speak a word.

Since they were submissive, Fang Yuan did not want to attract too much attention as well. He followed their lead and became an obedient villager as they paid their tax to enter the city.

"This is our license. It allows us to stay in the city for a day. Lord, please keep it well. There are soldiers patrolling in the city at every moment. If we do not find a place to stay by midnight, we would be captured and sent to the quarries, with no chance of coming out..."

"Oh?"

Fang Yuan received the license and realised that it was a clay

slab. It was made of a normal material, but there was a small spiritual inscription on it.

The spiritual inscription appeared useless and was only a form of marking. Based on the energy level, it would disappear in a few hours and could not last till the next day.

Descending Star City used this method to maintain order among the people living in the city.

However, to Fang Yuan, it was a useless method.

He looked around and noticed a small market.

Villagers that came from everywhere were following the lead of their leaders, and their eyes were filled with curiosity. They began to start trading at the market and were engaging in barter trade.

"My intention is to explore Descending Star City!"

Fang Yuan went up to Li Hu, who appeared pale. Without hesitation, Fang Yuan said, "Goodbye, I'll see you next time!"

He did not owe them anything. Instead, he provided protection to the entire caravan, and therefore he could leave without worries.

Li Hu was left dumbfounded and remained silent.

"Lord..."

Yu Jian clenched his teeth. "Bring me along! I want to be your servant! I am willing to do anything, and I eat very little..."

"Haha... Thanks, but I don't need a servant!"

Fang Yuan rubbed Yu Jian's head. "Little fellow, you should not take the risk now. Rather, you should continue to work hard on your martial arts and get a strong foundation, and take care of your family and your sister..."

This young boy had fate with Fang Yuan, but it was not enough to change his mind.

After saying his piece, Fang Yuan waved goodbye and disappeared into the crowd in style.

"Lord..."

Yu Jian was stunned.

He thought that based on his relationship with Fang Yuan, even if Fang Yuan would reject him as a disciple, he could still gain something from him.

Never would he have thought that Fang Yuan would leave just like that, destroying all hope that he initially had!

"How would it be so easy to get such a good deal... This is only reality!"

Although Li Hu was not willing, he still went forward and comforted Yu Jian. "Don't think about it anymore. At least you have left an impression of yourself in his mind. If you were to meet him in the future, you will have an advantage over others!"

Thinking about those people who boasted that they had found highly skilled masters in Descending Star City, he realised that all of them were gifted, and their family had enough wealth to support their dream. Some of the families even went bankrupt just to support their children!

If they didn't do this, how would they escape the cycle of poverty and bring hope to their family?

Young people nowadays were too weak!

...

"Indeed, even the words are in Da Qian language... The ancestor of Descending Star City must have migrated from Da Qian..."

Fang Yuan walked down a few streets and were looking at their signs.

The bestsellers in the market were still weapons and food!

Other than Hundred Casted Steel, there were weapons made out of beasts native to the icy plains and spiritual beasts. Their asking price was even higher than normal weapons, but the demand there.

Of course, these were still considered low-quality trades.

The top quality products would not be easily found on the streets, but in the majestic courts.

"Spiritual Array Court?"

Fang Yuan arrived at the centre of Descending Star City and noticed a towering building. The signboard was filled with words that were written with energy, but the most important was still an octagonal spiritual tablet. It was glittering on its surface and the spiritual inscriptions on it were glowing. This meant that a spiritual array master was in charge of this place.

"We sell all types of protective array plates, array maps, and the services of a spiritual array master..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin as he read off the introduction. He became increasingly excited.

To survive in a place with such harsh environments, they could rely on arrays!

Regardless if it was the brutal cold or the icy storm, the harsh natural weather conditions or the beasts native to the icy plains, all types of unknown dangers could wipe out an entire village.

Without the protection from a strong protective array, any prosperous village would still collapse after 3 days.

"It seems that the immigrants from Da Qian have obtained the inheritance to the array techniques in the Da Qian Empire..."

Fang Yuan walked into Spiritual Array Court and had a mysterious look on his face.

He had interest in knowing more about spiritual arrays.

If he was a normal spiritual knight, he had to worry that it might not be applicable to him.

However, on his path as a dream master, there were different paths to take after the Illusionary Divine Stage for him to specialise. There was no harm in understanding another path, and instead, it might even benefit him.

"Eh?"

As he entered the court, he could feel that something was different.

"The concentration of Heaven and Earth elemental energy? It's going up and is many times that of the outside... It has similar effects to a spiritual land!"

As he took another step forward, the surroundings suddenly expanded, revealing a huge hall. The decor was luxurious and did not feel normal at all.

"A new scene with every step? Indeed an array!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and arrived at the counter.

"Welcome, guest!"

The person at the counter was a middle-aged man smiling. He was wearing a silk robe and appeared wealthy.

Furthermore, he appeared happy and a little chubbier than the rest. Fang Yuan could tell that his living conditions must be much better than the villagers living in Rock Village.

"What do you need, guest?"

He had a professional smile on his face. "We sell an 'immovable array', and it is uniquely designed for defence. It consists of three array plates and eight array flags. If you follow the design on the spiritual array map, you will be able to achieve at least 80% of the original array's power! This is the top choice for many who are looking to protect their homes!"

"Of course, if you are not satisfied with it, you can leave a feedback. I will contact the spiritual array master, and he will personally help you arrange the array..."

"Immovable array?"

Looking at the sealed up wall behind the counter, together with the array plates that were glowing with spiritual light, he shook his head. "The area covered for this array is too small. What if I want to protect an entire village?"

"That will be a giant array!"

The person at the counter shook his head. "We only sell it at the heart of this court. To add on, you will need to receive approval from the City Lord Manor. If the city master does not approve of it, then we would not dare to bear this responsibility..."

A giant protective array would be protection for an entire village!

The city master of Descending Star City was the source of this spiritual array. This way, he managed to obtain land and control over the villages and therefore would want ultimate control over the distribution of this giant array.

"I see!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

He could tell that in Spiritual Array Court, of all the many counters, every counter had a corresponding spiritual array master which was at the level of a disciple.

The giant array of all the villages required a spiritual array master at the Elemental Gathering Stage to personally construct, and therefore people had to pay a premium for it. To add on, there were also many restrictions.

'It seems that the city master has the sole access to the spiritual array master's inheritance...'

Fang Yuan shook his head. "I need to put myself against the city

master just for a spiritual array master's inheritance? This doesn't seem... like it's worth it..."

Spiritual knights had all sorts of techniques up their sleeves. If enough time was given to a spiritual array master, he could surely come up with a shocking array capable of killing many. Fang Yuan did not want to test that theory out.

'The Descending Star City is their nest. A spiritual array master would have placed an array here that would last for eternity...'

Thinking about this, Fang Yuan was confused.

"It's alright. This seems not too bad, I'll have it!"

Just as the person at the counter thought that the trade was about to fall apart, Fang Yuan suddenly exclaimed, leaving him dazed.

"Alright. What would you use for payment?"

He rubbed his hands together as though he was extremely excited.

After all, it was not frequent that he would get a sale, and his commision would be quite a huge percentage.

"How's this?"

Fang Yuan smiled and took out a jade bottle.

Chapter 204: Kongming

"This is..."

The plump person at the counter broke the seal of the bottle and poured out a glowing pill. On the surface of the pill, there were spiritual inscriptions, and he froze. "Spiritual pill?"

His face twitched, and he swiftly kept the pill, acting all suspicious like a thief. After looking around, he bowed towards Fang Yuan. "You have spiritual pills? Please take a seat, and we'll serve you tea!"

"Mm!"

Fang Yuan looked down and acted mysteriously.

In fact, the value of these spiritual pills was beyond his expectations.

'That's true... After all, Descending Star City is on its own, and I don't see any alchemy masters passing down their skills. They are also scarce in resources...'

Looking at the attentive person at the counter, Fang Yuan came to a conclusion. "The value of these spiritual pills are more than what I've guessed."

"Keke..."

The person led Fang Yuan to a beautiful room and personally served him tea. Afterwards, he began to introduce himself. "My name is Hai Fu. I am the representative of array master Zhang Kongfan, who has learnt from Kongming the Godly Monk. Master Zhang is extraordinary and his Immovable Array is indeed remarkable..."

Hai Fu had a glib tongue and could almost describe the elementary version of the Immovable Array into a gigantic array cast by a spiritual array master.

"Keke..."

Fang Yuan smiled and did not say a single word. He sipped his tea gracefully and looked at Hai Fu.

As he stared at Hai Fu, Hai Fu started to sweat profusely. He clenched his teeth. "If you have 4 bottles of this spiritual pill, I'll make the decision to sell you this array, and let's take this as an opportunity to make friends!"

Looking at Hai Fu's face muscles twitch, it was as though Fang Yuan was taking advantage of him.

However, Fang Yuan knew that if the deal would go through, Hai Fu would be able to profit a lot from it.

After all, no one should trust anything a businessman would say.

Amidst the silence, Hai Fu started to sweat even more and started to bargain. "3 Bottles. That's the minimum I can go. Just the array plate of this Immovable Array would already require rubies, Hepu Stones and Mysterious Ice Essences..."

"I am alright with 3 bottles of spiritual pills!"

Under Hai Fu's worrying eyes, Fang Yuan finally opened his mouth. "But I have a condition!"

In reality, these spiritual pills were made by Lanruo and himself and were far more inferior than the ones Lu Renjia made. However, it would already be considered a treasure here in Descending Star City.

"Please state your condition!"

Spiritual pills were in high demand, and there was always a price for it on the market, but no one would sell it.

The moment he heard that there was a chance that the deal might go through, Hai Fu's eyes glittered.

"I want to meet the maker of this array plate, Zhang Kongfan, Master Zhang! Of course, it would be even better if I could see

Kongming the Godly Monk!"

Fang Yuan asked in a deep voice.

"You are a big customer. Of course, there's no problem in letting you see Master Kongfan... But as for Kongming the Godly Monk..."

Hai Fu let out an uneasy look and pushed the bottles back. "If you insist, then we have to break the deal."

"Forget about it!"

Fang Yuan smiled. He knew that he had crossed the line. "Zhang Kongfan would be alright. Send him here!"

'What an attitude...'

Hai Fu kept the spiritual pills, passed him the array plates and felt a little suspicious about the whole thing.

However, seeing how Fang Yuan could easily take out so many bottles of spiritual pills made him wonder if he was an alchemy master. In that instant, all his unhappiness and suspicions were gone.

"Please wait out here!"

He took a bow and walked out of the room swiftly.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan sat down for a while. Suddenly, he frowned and looked at a certain corner of the room.

Just a few moments ago, he realised that an array with the properties of hypnotisation was activated. Hai Fu was testing his skills.

'How dare he!'

Fang Yuan was infuriated and gave a cold look.

"I'm sorry for the wait, Master Zhang is here!"

Indeed, not long after, Hai Fu pushed the door open and

appeared extremely humble.

Following which, a man in his thirties walked in with a proud look on his face.

"You have requested to look for me?"

He had an impatient look on his face. "What's the matter? If you are requesting for me to cast an array, we'll have to settle the payment separately. If you are looking at rectifying the protective array over the villages, I'll need the city master's approval..."

"It's not about all these..."

Fang Yuan scoffed. "It's just that I have never seen an array master before, which was why I called you out... What a pity... You're such a disappointment, hehe..."

"What?"

Zhang Kongfan was enraged.

As a prestigious array master - albeit just a disciple for now, they were proud people wherever they went. Never had they experienced such humiliation!

"You... what audacity!"

His body shook, and he stared fiercely at Hai Fu.

"Forgive me, master!"

Hai Fu was scared to his wits and started to kneel down.

Never would he have known that the normal -looking Fang Yuan would be a fraud!

"I was initially intending to talk over some terms with you. It's a pity you have an evil mind. By using your array to spy on me, you have violated my rules..."

Fang Yuan calmly spoke.

"You..."

Zhang Kongfan almost choked.

Every room in Spiritual Array Court was protected with spiritual arrays. This was done in consideration for the spiritual array master's safety.

After all, since he was rather weak, wasn't it normal for him to check on the other party before agreeing to meet him? How would it become violating Fang Yuan's rules?

Although he really had an evil intent, he had not displayed it yet.

"Hai Fu, capture him, give him a good beating and take all his valuables..."

Zhang Kongfan became very serious.

From what he had obtained from the array, he detected that this person was only a normal martial artist. Even though he might have status or a strong backing, he had to get back at him! This was a matter of an array master's pride!

"Yes, master!"

Hai Fu stood up like a loyal dog, as though he was ready to pounce on Fang Yuan anytime.

"Hehe, you're just a spiritual disciple, and yet you don't know where you should stand!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and squinted his eyes.

Hai Fu froze and fell to the ground, with his eyes staring up.

"E? You're not a normal person!"

Zhang Kongfan realised something was wrong. "How could you hide from the spying of my spiritual array?"

"That's because you're too weak!"

Fang Yuan remained seated without moving. Suddenly, he struck his right hand out.

"Whoosh!"

As the air circulated around the room, it was as though there was an invisible hand as it lifted Zhang Kongfan up, pulling him towards the position where Fang Yuan was seated.

"Four levels of Heaven and Earth, Protect!"

Zhang Kongfan retreated and crushed a certain spiritual talisman. A protective glow of light appeared.

Not just that, the array over the entire court seemed to be moving. A huge force was felt, but it was unknown where it came from.

"It's useless!"

Fang Yuan lightly blew.

"Whoooo!"

Suddenly, there were strong gusts of wind.

Zhang Kongfan went pale. He felt as though the person sitting in front of him was not a human, but a mountain! A heavenly mountain!

A shocking amount of energy exploded from Fang Yuan, which isolated him from his array.

"Although I might only have limited control over the array, the fact that you can disrupt my control over the array, it means that you are... Wu Zong..."

Zhang Kongfan clenched his teeth and forcefully remarked.

Never would he have thought that this rude young man in front of him had already broken through the Elemental Gathering Realm!

Even with his potential and the help of his master, he was only a spiritual disciple!

"Have you finally realised what's happening?"

Fang Yuan smiled. A layer of bewildering fog covered the entire

room, and suddenly it engulfed Zhang Kongfan!

...

"Namo Amituofo!"

With his control over the array disrupted, and the fact that there was so much commotion, the entire Spiritual Array Court had already known what was happening.

Just as Fang Yuan was about to execute his dream-accessing technique on Zhang Kongfan, a Buddhist bell was heard as a compassionate-looking old monk entered the room.

"My disciple is reckless. May you be compassionate and let him go this time!"

This old monk was tall and his eyebrows were extremely long. His eyes were small and it was as though his vision was not that good.

"Hehe, Master, since he's your disciple, why would I cause trouble for him?"

Fang Yuan let go of his hand and exclaimed forcefully. "I'm just reprimanding him for his mistakes!"

This old monk was Zhang Kongfan's master - Kongming the Godly Monk!

He was different from his disciple; he was a true spiritual array master!

"He is indeed alright, and has merely passed out"

Kongming the Godly Monk walked up and checked on Zhang Kongfan and Hai Fu. Afterwards, he placed his hands together in front of his chest. "Thank you for your benevolence!"

Little did he know that Fang Yuan was already laughing inside of him.

No one could tell from the outside that he had executed his

dream-accessing technique, as Zhang Kongfan seemed perfectly normal.

Even Kongming the Godly Monk would have no idea that in just a short period, Fang Yuan had already learnt all these spiritual array techniques through Zhang Kongfan.

'It seems that a group of spiritual array masters came together to rule the city undercover. They are indeed from Da Qian Empire and only came here because of the disaster...'

Fang Yuan quickly scanned through Zhang Kongfan's memories and sieved out the important information.

The physical bodies of the spiritual array masters were too weak to traverse through the hell-like icy gorges. Therefore, years ago, the group of spiritual array masters were conflicted if they should go through the icy gorges. Finally, they decided not to and settled down here, forming the Descending Star City.

'It should be Star Ghost who is in charge of Descending Star City now! Of course, Kongming the Godly Monk is also at the level of Elemental Gathering Realm, and it the second most powerful spiritual array master in Descending Star City!'

Although these two people were not Elemental Opening Realm spiritual knights, they had already settled down in Descending Star City for quite a while. If enraged, even normal Elemental Opening Realm spiritual knights might not be able to fight against them.

After all, they had the geographical advantage.

"This master..."

Kongming the Godly Monk looked at Fang Yuan with shock. "Why do I find you unfamiliar... I have long known all the highly skilled martial artists in the entire Descending Star City..."

"Unless..."

With his small eyes, he could still assess the situation calmly.

"You are not from this city!"

Chapter 205: 4 Elements

"Where do you think I come from?"

Truth be told, if Fang Yuan were to tell a lie about his background, it might be sufficient to fool those low-leveled lackeys of the Rock Village. However, he would most certainly be unable to fool a person of Kongming the Godly Monk's calibre.

Afterall, Descending Star City was too small. There was no way that it would suddenly produce an unknown Wu Zong.

"You must be from Da Qian!"

The old monk said confidently.

Fang Yuan felt slightly ashamed.

Great! Due to his exposure to Yang Fan's dream world, he was able to speak the dialect fluently which caused Kongming to be mistaken.

"Could it be that the Da Qian is very close to here? Or that there are no other people gathered around here?"

Fang Yuan asked.

"Oh?"

Kongming the Godly Monk was shocked and twirled his beads faster. "You are not from Da Qian? Then you must be from Vast Deserts? Hell of Thousand Ghosts? Death Corridor?"

'All these places are landmarks behind the Descending Star City?'

Fang Yuan muttered as he considered overpowering the monk and using his Dream Entering abilities.

"Or...from the South? Impossible!"

The monk racked his brains, "No one is able to break through the Ghost Gate in the icy gorge!"

Seeing how certain the monk's tone was, Fang Yuan recalled that

if he had not already broken through the Meridian Opening Realm and had the opportunity to strengthen his physical body, it would indeed be difficult to pass it.

From the way that the old monk reacted to the danger, Fang Yuan knew that there were few who managed to break through the Ghost Gate and reach the Yuan Wu Kingdom.

"Enough! What is the use of investigating where I come from?"

Fang Yuan smiled and asked directly.

"Not bad, I am just asking!"

Kongming the Godly Monk acted as though he had attained enlightenment and bowed at Fang Yuan again. "May I know what brings you here?"

While the Descending Star City was isolated, those with authority were in contact with their counterparts from other areas. It was just that news travelled slowly and as such, he was unable to discern Fang Yuan's identity.

"I have no plans. I am just travelling!"

Fang Yuan appeared to be disinterested and said, "I heard that the Way of Array in the Descending Star City is second to none. As such, I specially came here to have a look..."

"Hehe...this is nothing more than lies which are perpetrated to deceive the commoners!"

Kongming shook his head. However, Fang Yuan was able to see the pride in Kongming's eyes.

"I came across something strange on my journey and I would like to pay a visit to the city master. Would it be convenient to pay him a visit?"

Fang Yuan stared at Kongming the Godly Monk and asked suddenly.

"Although the city master is busy running the daily affairs, if he

knows that someone of your calibre is here, he would definitely come and personally welcome you!"

Kongming put his hands together, "You said that you witnessed something strange, may I know what happen?"

"I passed by a village known as Red Leaf Village! All the villagers were slaughtered and the village was in a miserable state... I could hardly bear to look at it."

Fang Yuan said slowly and saw that Kongming's actions quickened, "Tales of ghosts and monsters cannot be trusted. However, I am interested in this curse and would like to help!"

"Amituofo, you are so kind. You will definitely enjoy karmic reward in the future!"

Kongming nodded his head. "I will pass on this information to the city master. However, how the city master responds would be beyond my control..."

"Ohh...."

At this time, there was a cry of alarm.

Zhang Kongfan clutched his head and slowly got up. He saw Fang Yuan and his face was full of fear. "You...what have you done to me?"

"Cough cough..."

Kongming the Godly Monk coughed, causing Zhang Kongfan to turn around and bow. "Master!"

"Hmmm, this master over here is more senior than you and highly skilled. Why would he purposely make things difficult for you?"

Kongming chided before he spoke to Fang Yuan. "My disciple is stubborn and have not been inducted into the Way of Brahma. He is just a disciple. Please forgive him for all the mistakes he makes! Kongfan! Apologise to this master immediately!"

"Yes, Master!"

A master's order should never be disobeyed. Furthermore, Zhang Kongfan had no confidence after seeing how his master was respectful towards Fang Yuan. He immediately turned to Fang Yuan and bowed, "Please forgive me for my mistakes!"

The fat shopkeeper, Hai Fu, who was standing by the side nearly fainted upon witnessing this scene.

Since when did the high and mighty spiritual array master have to treat a person with caution?

"It's okay!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand. He was not interested in dealing with the lackey.

Furthermore, Zhang Kongfan was considered unlucky. His compensation was more than sufficient and Fang Yuan was lazy to pursue the matter.

"Thank you, Master!"

Kongming the Godly Monk was pleased. Zhang Kongfan, who was by his side, had no choice but to follow suit and bow. Hai Fu was still feeling dizzy. Everyone could see his condition but no one took notice of it.

"Do you have any place to stay in the Descending Star City?"

Kongming continued, "If you have not decided on a place to stay, I can offer you a place at the sambhogakaya monastery. It is quite peaceful..."

"Hmmmm, then I shall gladly accept it. Thank you!"

Fang Yuan rose and walked out of the shop with the old monk.

Zhang Kongfan followed behind like a servant. He was sullen but had no avenue to vent his feeling. All he could do was glare vehemently at Hai Fu before walking out.

Hai Fu wanted to cry but no tears came as he witnessed this scene...

...

Fang Yuan and Kongming the Godly Monk walked side by side on the path. The soldiers at the sides immediately bowed and parted when they saw the both of them. It was clear that Kongming held a high position in the city. Afterall, he was a spiritual array master in the Elemental Gathering Realm.

"What do you think of the arrays in this city?"

Kongming the Godly Monk asked absentmindedly.

"Excellent...if I am not wrong, this array consists of 4 elements as its foundations. The 4 elements are Green Dragon, White Tiger, Vermillion and Black Tortoise which guarded the four gates rigorously....however, the array of the Vermillion in the South appears different from the conventional 4 Elements Spiritual Array. It appears to be a variant of the conventional spiritual array!"

While Fang Yuan may not be a spiritual array master, He was knowledgeable and not many could compare to him. His offhanded remark surprised Kongming, "You are so sharp and yet, you only dabbled in the Way of Arrays?"

Zhang Kongfan, who was standing behind, was shocked and felt ashamed.

Fang Yuan was proficient in the Way of Arrays and spying on him with his arrays was similar to provoking him openly. As such, it was no wonder that Kongfan would lose out.

"The Way of Arrays is mysterious and full of potential. How can I say that I dabbled in it? I merely tried it out as an eye-opener to this path..."

Fang Yuan smiled.

Truth be told, with Zhang Kongfan's experience and his foundation in arrays, his skills were comparable to that of a spiritual array disciple. He was only lacking in terms of practice.

"I see!"

Kongming the Godly Monk laughed but he did not believe Fang Yuan.

Afterall, the Way of Arrays required much effort. His intuition told him that Fang Yuan was gifted as he was able to attain Wu Zong even though he was still young. What would the older generation and he be if Fang Yuan was able to reach his prowess in spiritual prowess so easily?

"This is due to the fact that the South faces the icy gorge and plains which possess hidden dangers. Amongst the arrays protecting the Descending Star City, the Vermillion Fiery Array had been adapted and is the strongest of the 4 arrays..."

However, the old monk did not delve deeper into the explanation and introduced it simply to Fang Yuan with a gentle smile. "Furthermore, there is still a layer of change hidden within the array!"

"Oh! What change?"

Fang Yuan asked while staring at the sky.

"It appears that you have figured out a thing or two, not bad. The answer to this lies in the history of the Descending Star City! The reason behind why the city can stand till today!"

Kongming said with a hint of pride.

"Please teach me!"

Fang Yuan put on a humble front. Suddenly, his gaze changed as he looked towards the city fair.

There, indistinct sounds of quarrelling could be heard. The noise came from a delegation of Rock Village.

"What?"

Kongming the Godly Monk stopped walking. "Are you interested in what is happening there?"

"Yes, I have met a few of them before!"

Fang Yuan said calmly.

"If that is the case, we should go there and have a look!"

Kongming the Godly Monk put his arms together and with the air of an important person, turned and walked towards the city fair.

...

"This is too much!"

Yu Jian's face was red with anger. He pointed towards a businessman, "This is good quality Black Rice and beast hide! You agreed to trade green salt and casted steel for my goods and now, you dare to use inferior salt and rough steel to appease us?"

"Hehe..."

The businessman stroked his rat-like beard, his eyes shrewd, "Who says that your goods are of good quality? It is already not bad that you are receiving these as a trade for your rubbish! What? Still want to cause trouble?"

The businessman had backing, and as such, he was able to do business at the fair. Furthermore, he was a resident of the Descending Star City and as such, he was not afraid to call upon the soldiers. It was not easy to determine who would have the last laugh.

"Yu Jian, don't be rash!"

Just as Yu Jian was about to leap forward and fight with the businessman, Li Hu grabbed onto his right shoulder and pinned him.

"Whatever! This deal is off! Return my goods to me!"

Li Hu coldly stared at the businessman with a killing intent.

"Okay!"

The crafty businessman smiled, "However, you only gave me 1500 kg of inferior black rice and 200 sheets of torn hide. These are not worth much..."

"You..."

Li Hu was fuming.

He remembered that the opposite party was frantically loading the goods. It was obvious that he had planned to scam them.

At this moment, even though he was well-tempered, he wanted to kill the businessman and his hand reached for the hilt of his sword.

"Soldier! Soldier!"

The businessman immediately shouted as he leapt away.

"What's wrong?"

A group of soldiers who were patrolling came forward. The leader had a high spiritual aura and was a martial artist of the 4 Heavenly Gates.

"Sir...these villagers from outside the city banded together to bully us citizens!"

The sly businessman was brazen in his accusations as he had backing. His uncle was a leader in the patrol.

If he did not have the connections, he would not have dared to do such a thing.

"I see!"

The leader of the patrol was familiar with the businessman as well. Without a second look, he signalled to his troops with a wave of his hand. "Capture all of them!"

Chapter 206: City Master

"What?"

Yu Jian was only a young boy; this was the first time he had experienced the dark side of society.

These cunning businessman cheated them of their goods and even wanted to send them to jail!

"Foreigners, how dare all of you. It seems that there will be quite a few new additions to the cells!"

The leader of the patrolling guards exclaimed.

In his heart, he was thinking. 'Rock Village has no strong backing. Even if we kill them, no one would stand up for them...'

There was no doubt which side justice would favour.

"Sir, we are willing to give up our good. Please let us go!"

Li Hu was pale. He had no more intention to go against them and started to plead.

"Hehe... This is the consequence of getting on my nerves!"

The cunning businessman was laughing at one side. "All of you... go and reflect on your actions in the quarry! Guards, please!"

"Hold up!"

Zhang Kongfan, who was now a messenger, appeared.

"You are..."

The leader of the patrolling guards was shocked. As he noticed Zhong Kongfan's luxurious clothing and a logo he had on him, he appeared stern and took a bow. "Sir!"

As a spiritual array master, even if he was just a spiritual disciple, everyone in the city would show their utmost respect to them as they were the ones running the city.

"Mm, these people..."

Zhang Kongfan stared at Li Hu intently and clenched his teeth.
"They are my friends... What's happening?"

"Ah... Nothing much!"

The leader of the patrolling guards was stunned. Between the businessman and the spiritual array master, he quickly took a stand.

Turning around, he stared at the businessman with justice.
"Businessman Min, you have wrongly accused of these foreigners.
Follow us to the government court. We'll also need you to seal up
your storeroom, and we'll check it!"

"This... This..."

The cunning businessman was stunned.

His backing was only the uncle of the leader. If they wanted to do things 'by the book', he would have no grounds to resist.

Furthermore, as Businessman Min looked at Zhang Kongfan, his legs turned jelly.

Never would he have thought that these foreigners had a spiritual array master as their backing!

How was this possible?

How would a person of such a high status get involved with these lowly people?

Businessman Min's heart was filled with regret. However, he knew that there was nothing more that he could say. Everything was reasonable.

After all, he was a smart person, and without hesitation, he admitted. "I admit to my wrongdoings! I shouldn't have listened to rumours and caused trouble to these people!"

Looking at Li Hu and Yu Jian, he was now smiling. "I'll return

you your goods, and compensate you guys another 10 rocks of green salt, 130 pounds of top-quality metal. Please accept!"

Li Hu and Yu Jian rolled their eyes.

In reality, both of them had no clue as to what was happening, and how did the situation change.

The originally fierce looking businessman suddenly became an obedient one, to the extent that he was afraid they might not accept his gifts.

"All of this had become as such, and we owe it to the appearance of this Sir!"

Li Hu looked at Zhang Kongfan and could guess that this person had a high social standing. Quickly, he knelt down. "Thank you for saving our lives, Rock Village will never forget you!"

"No worries, I have been tasked by someone else to do this!"

Zhang Kongfan had an unnatural look on his face. Turning around, he did not accept the gratitude from these people.

After all, if not for his Master's instructions, he wouldn't care less about their survival.

"Since this is so..."

Li Hu knew the limit. Even though Zhang Kongfan was a strong backing, he did not want to force it on him, which might result in a backlash. "Then we shall keep things as such!"

He took a bow towards the leader of the patrolling guards. "Thank you for upholding justice!"

"Mm, you're welcome!"

The leader smiled. He knew that they were thankful for his help. "I am Luo Fan. If you do visit Descending Star City in the future, you can look for me!"

"I've settled this, and I shall take my leave!"

Zhang Kongfan looked down and left. He did not care less about how they were going to settle the issue.

"Eh? That is..."

Yu Jian looked towards the direction where Zhang Kongfan headed towards. Rubbing his eyes, he thought that he had seen a familiar silhouette. After blinking a few times, they were all gone, and it was like an illusion.

"That should be Lord!"

Li Hu walked towards him and exclaimed with confidence. They only had relations with one such powerful person. "Who would've known that he could manipulate a spiritual array master..."

In his voice, there was a hint of regret.

Although they already knew that Fang Yuan was extraordinary, they now could tell that his status was very much higher than what they could have imagined.

...

Just as they were all excited, Fang Yuan arrived at Kongming the Godly Monk's monastery.

"Sambhogakaya Monastery?"

Looking at the huge signboard, he smiled. "I've heard that in Brahma, there are three types of bodies. They are Sambhogakaya, Dhammakaya and Nirmanakaya. Every single type of these bodies have immense capabilities and are all unpredictable. How many of these bodies have you cultivated, Master?"

"Oh? You know about the teachings of Brahma?"

Kongming the Godly Monk was shocked, but afterwards, he shook his head and sighed. "My ancestor was a Buddhist from Da Qian Empire. There were rumours that he had already cultivated his Sambhogakaya. However, his descendants were all weak and they were unable to escape Da Qian. Therefore, we have lost

almost half of all our scriptures. How could there be any teachings left for us to cultivate? I am useless, and have only understood and discovered a few illusionary theories on spiritual arrays for me to advance to become a spiritual array master..."

He was in a daze, as though he had started to recall his younger days.

"I see!"

Fang Yuan was interested in the recordings about spiritual arrays.

However, he knew that he could not show his interest right away. Otherwise, it would be as though he was declaring war on them.

'Why do all the authors of martial arts manual dislike recording down their teachings properly?'

He thought to himself silently as he walked into the monastery.

The monastery appeared lavish on the outside, but the interior decor was simple. There was a tall Banyan tree in the middle of the courtyard and it was flourishing. Every pavilion was nicely decorated and the presence of the monastery bells and gongs gave this place a sense of serenity.

"Peace within chaos. This is a good place!"

Seeing this place, Fang Yuan let out a sigh.

"I'm glad you like it!"

Kongming the Godly Monk was welcoming. "If you like this place, you can stay here for as long as you like!"

"Thank you!"

Although the courtyard was a good place, the Banyan tree, statue of Buddha and the arrangement of everything in the monastery gave Fang Yuan a strong feeling that he was within an array.

"Did I walk into a trap knowingly? Kongming the Godly Monk must be glad now, right?"

He was laughing at his own stupidity inside. Following Kongming the Godly Monk, he arrived at a room and settled down.

"Please have your meal!"

The meditation room was plain and simple. Inside, there was a fragrance incense burning, and none of the decors here appeared luxurious.

After meditating for a while, Fang Yuan heard a courteous knock on his door. Following his acknowledgement, a small monk entered. "Grandmaster had informed us that you are our valued guest and you have no dietary restrictions like us. Just let us know what you'd like to have for your meal, and we will buy it back for you!"

"Mm, thank you!"

Fang Yuan took the tray of dishes over and realised that it was a vegetarian meal.

There was a stack of fragrance stir-fried mushrooms. This was an interesting dish that made use of the most common ingredients. The few other vegetarian dishes were all very interesting in their own ways and were fragrant. The rice prepared was a type of spiritual rice known as 'Little Lightning'. Every grain of it was pointy and in each grain were tiny flashes of light. Long periods of consumption would allow one to be immune to electrocution. When eating it, one's tongue would feel as though it was being electrocuted, and it was indeed a memorable dish.

This vegetarian meal was comparable to food for royalties, even though it did not include any meat dishes.

"If not for the things that I have to attend to, this would be a good place for me to settle down for the rest of my life..."

After finishing the meal, he dismissed the young monk, he

thought to himself. If not for the quirky things in this city, it would be even better!"

"Hehe... Master Fang Yuan!"

Without letting Fang Yuan rest, Kongming the Godly Monk personally came to visit him. "You have a good reputation indeed. When the city master heard of your arrival, he rescheduled his important matters tonight, and is now rushing down to pay you a visit..."

"This is not about my reputation. I'm sure the city master is concerned for the villagers and is only anxious after hearing about the tragedy in Red Leaf Village!"

Fang Yuan casually replied Kongming the Godly Monk, which stunned him for a while. He could not say anything else and smiled at Fang Yuan.

...

Sambhogakaya Monastery was rather huge. In the backyard, there was a spacious garden, and in the middle of the garden was a small octagonal pavilion.

At this point in time, under the pavilion, there was a person patiently waiting.

He had sharp eyes and a majestic vibe. Although he had the appearance of a middle-aged man, his skin was glowing white. He was wearing a crown and did not appear old at all. Instead, he appeared full of life.

"Is this my young friend, Fang Yuan?"

He raised his head and looked at the approaching Fang Yuan. As he smiled, his eyes were filled with curiosity.

"I'm Fang Yuan from the wilderness. Greetings, city master!"

Fang Yuan paid his respects and entered the pavilion without any hesitation.

"You've come from afar, and as the host of this city, I have failed to welcome you. Please forgive me!"

He had a deep and attractive voice and gave off a masculine feel. Indeed, he was very welcoming.

However, for unknown reasons, looking at the perfect and masculine face of the city master, Fang Yuan's face twitched and he had the urge to go up and give him a punch.

He could no longer hold it back. "I shall not hide my intentions. I am intending to go to Da Qian Empire. However, I am lost, and I hope that you can provide me with a map..."

"Oh?"

The city master of Descending Star City frowned, expressing his curiosity. Slowly, he nodded his head. "This is a small matter. Don't keep it to your heart! I will send someone to bring a map over shortly..."

Looking at Fang Yuan, his eyes were filled with suspicion. "Could you have... came from the South of the icy gorge?"

That icy hell was a huge obstacle that came from the heavens. It had blocked the path of many, and therefore, the appearance of Fang Yuan meant a lot to him.

Chapter 207: The Revelation

Regardless if it was Descending Star City, the Vast Deserts, or the Death Corridor... all these places were not meant for humans to survive.

They were forced to have so many villages.

All the village ancestors were people who have been defeated during fights in Da Qian, and had no choice but to emigrate.

The path here from Da Qian was only possible with the sacrifice from many ancestors before them.

However, the fact was that the ancestor of Descending Star City was also like the rest; stuck and denied entry by the chilly winds and icy gorge!

'This is not right...'

Fang Yuan looked at the city master of Descending Star City and suddenly thought of something else.

'It seems that everything has been set in stone. After all, no matter how much the citizens or villagers are suffering, those at the top are already leading a comfortable life. Therefore, they had no motivation to risk their lives and head South... Rather than gambling their lives away to risk it through the icy gorge, why not head back to Da Qian Empire!;

Even Yuan and Wu Country of the mainland were considered slums when compared to Da Qian Empire.

With Yang Fan's memories, Fang Yuan was extremely clear about this.

This could be described as how the people from poorer countries might risk their lives to immigrate to a more prosperous country, and rarely would you see people going the other way round.

'This is true... Who knows if he was the nth generation of city

masters. Since the enemies they made in Da Qian Empire did not track them all the way here, it must mean that they must have given up. If they change their names and secretly return to Da Qian, they might have a good chance of living their entire lives there... However, they would surely prefer to be king and rule over the city here..."

Fang Yuan thought of something else. He felt that he now had a deeper understanding of the people who gave up their initial plans of migrating to the South.

With a smile, he continued. "Does it matter if I come from the South?"

"That's true..."

The city master of Descending Star City stroked his beard without another word. It was obvious that he would not take the risk to explore the mainland South of the icy gorge.

"City master, are you here to discuss what happened at Red Leaf Village?"

Fang Yuan changed the topic. "Everyone in the village disappeared without a word, and the village was soaked in their blood. There were no corpses lying around, and this phenomenon is mysterious!"

"You might not know about all these since you are not from our region. However, this is a common sight..."

The city master sighed. "It has been an annual affair for these mysterious things to happen. If it's a small scale event, it would affect 10 people. If it's of a bigger scale, it might affect te to hundreds of people, or even the entire village! Even so, we would not find it unusual at all..."

"Where do you think this curse had come from, city master?"

Fang Yuan looked down to avoid eye contact.

"Based on my predictions... It comes from a higher being!"

The city master appeared serious. "Our existence is miraculous. The only explanation which might sound illogical is the existence of a higher being..."

"Even if the higher being was to be destroyed, a simple thought of hatred and anger from it would linger around for eternity. If it meets a storm, it would transfigure into a poisonous dragon!"

"Their souls would never die..."

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered. "City master, you are guessing that there is a vengeful soul lingering around?"

"Does it matter if there is or there isn't?"

The city master laughed. "With the Four Elements Spiritual Array, be in a vengeful soul or a curse, nothing can come near us!"

What about the villages?

The villagers were lowly. Would he even care?

"Indeed..."

Fang Yuan gave out a long sigh.

In this world where power means authority, it would be too naive to place hopes on the powerful.

"Then what is the purpose of your visit, city master?"

"I have heard of the arrival of a Wu Zong and found it to be interesting, which is why I paid a visit!"

The city master examined Fang Yuan with much interest. "Do you want to contribute to Descending Star City? If you agree, I will treat you as well as how I treat Kongming the Godly Monk!"

"Master Kongming is a spiritual array master!"

Fang Yuan was shocked. "City master, why do you think that a small Wu Zong can be compared to a powerful spiritual array master?"

"I have my own plans!"

The city master smiled, brimming with confidence. "What do you think?"

"I'm sorry!"

Fang Yuan rejected him without hesitation. "My dreams lie in Da Qian....."

"What a pity..."

The city master did not feel dejected. Instead, he cautioned him out of goodwill. "The Vasts Deserts, Hell of Thousand Ghosts and the Death Corridor are places that are not easy to traverse through. Only patches of areas in these places are suited for survival, and the rest of the region is filled with dangers. If you regret at any point in time, feel free to return here. The doors of Descending Star City will always remain open for you..."

"Thank you!"

Fang Yuan thanked him and ended their short meetup.

'This city master is too helpful. I'm sure that he has an ulterior motive!'

It was suspicious that he offered Fang Yuan a high position despite the fact that Fang Yuan contributed nothing to them!

Human nature was the same everywhere.

The next day, the city master had ordered a servant to deliver a piece of map carved on an animal's hide. Although the lines drawn on the map were thick and not detailed, it could accurately depict the general shape of Descending Star City, the Vast Deserts, Death Corridor and more. It was indeed a sincere act on the part of the city master.

"Please thank the city master on my behalf!"

After getting the map, Fang Yuan wasted no time. He bade farewell to Kongming the Godly Monk and walked out of

Sambhogakaya Monastery.

"Master?"

Kongming the Godly Master personally guided Fang Yuan out for a few miles. He held a string of meditation beads in his hand and continuously chanted his mantra.

One of his disciples could no longer hold himself back. "Why not..."

"It is fate to start and end, fate to rise and fall. All of these are sins!"

Kongming the Godly Monk sighed. Without explanation, he waved his sleeves. "We will return to our monastery. All of you, remember! If there is nothing important, don't leave the monastery..."

...

Walking on the streets of Descending Star City once again, Fang Yuan gained the admiration of many villagers and felt that this was a little interesting.

Unknowingly, he had walked to the vicinity of the East Gate.

"If he were to do anything, he would do it here..."

Fang Yuan let out a sigh.

"Whoosh!"

Indeed, at the next moment, his surroundings spun around and vibrated like waves. As he composed himself, he realized that the surrounding people, streets, the noisy market and the tall walls were all gone. The only thing left was a big square, and Fang Yuan stood by himself in the centre of the square.

"Spiritual array? Changing of the array?"

Fang Yuan looked around and gave a respectable look. "This is indeed impressive!"

"This is the Soaring Green Dragon Technique originating from the Four Elements Spiritual Array. It's my honour that you admire this array!"

In the empty square, a loud voice was heard.

A shadow slowly approached him. It was the city master of Descending Star City!

"It's you indeed!"

Fang Yuan sighed once again. "I have unintentionally seen your secrets, but I am already on my way to leave the city. Why do you want to force me into a corner?"

"This is... indeed my fault!"

The city master remained silent for long. Suddenly, he sighed and continued. "As a form of compensation, I shall explain to you all that has happened from the beginning!"

"Even if you don't explain to me, I can roughly guess... Red Leaf Village and all the other past events were caused by you, am I right?"

Fang Yuan shook his head and sighed. "Your intention... is to either use them as a sacrifice or to trade their lives, in order for you to obtain your power!"

"That's right. In order to maintain the Four Elements Spiritual Array till now, how much resources do you think I would need? Even if we were to bury the nucleus of a star at the heart of the array, it still would not be enough! I will have to maintain it regularly..."

"This is almost similar to how I've imagined it to be..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head. "Then why look for me?"

"In order to withstand the brutally cold weather these few years, the Four Elements Spiritual Array was damaged. Although I am in the midst of repairing it, I am lacking in a crucial ingredient. After

thinking for long, I have thought of making use of a Wu Zongs' blood essence and a few other ingredients which I already have, so that I can replace this method of regularly sacrificing so many people..."

"In this city, all the Wu Zongs are your own people, except me, of which I have foolishly walked into your trap..."

Fang Yuan sighed.

"That's right!"

The city master took a respectful bow. "Please rest in peace. The entire Descending Star City will be eternally grateful for your contribution..."

As he finished his sentence, his body was surrounded by a sense of 'justice'!

Through his expression, Fang Yuan knew that the city master felt that everything he had done was the correct decision and that under his orders, he felt that even Fang Yuan, who was a Wu Zong, must obediently sacrifice himself to contribute to the foundations of the Four Elements Spiritual Array!

"This mindset of yours... it's rather irritating!"

Fang Yuan shook his head without any intent to hide his intentions of killing.

"Do you think you can escape?"

The city master of Descending Star City sounded extremely confident and appeared relaxed.

It was totally understandable for him to feel such a way.

After all, Fang Yuan was in the centre of his Four Elements Spiritual Array.

Generations of spiritual array masters had completely transformed this land into a trap that no one would be able to escape!

As he clapped his hands, two Wu Zongs appeared. They revealed a cunning smile and slowly approached Fang Yuan.

With so many advantages for the city master, a normal Wu Zong had to obediently listen to him.

'Really...'

After Fang Yuan figured out the reason behind the deaths of all the people in Red Leaf Village, he did not know whether to laugh or to cry. He gave a cold look.

"I don't want to trouble you, and yet you don't want to let me go?"

Even so, the transformation ability of the Four Elements Spiritual Array did give Fang Yuan a shock, as it was something he had never seen before.

"Forget about it. I'll let you know that this is a terrible mistake of yours!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath as the spiritual aura around him changed.

"Something's not right!"

At this point in time, the city master was left gaping. "I just had news that this person's energy consumption is 10 times more than a normal Wu Zong! He is not a normal Wu Zong, but a Meridian Opening Stage Wu Zong!"

"That's right! I'm sorry, it's too late!"

Fang Yuan laughed heartily as three spiritual meridians appeared on his body, forming a spiritual armour. Without holding back, he struck a punch towards the city master!

Chapter 208: Vermilion Bird

Fang Yuan originally had the Fifth Elemental Force. With the 1st Refining Stage of his Hundred Poison Golden Body, he had gained 1 elemental power. In total, he had achieved the Sixth Elemental Force!

What was the implication of this?

Nie Kuang, who had managed to form a divine body and forced his way through the icy gorge, was able to defeat many Elemental Opening realm spiritual knights at his peak! He had the Seventh Elemental Force then!

Fang Yuan was not far from him. By leveraging the element of surprise, his power was multiplied by many folds.

"Rumble!"

The entire square shook.

Before the other two Wu Zong could come to their senses, Fang Yuan's fists had already reached them.

He was quick! Quick beyond imagination!

"Ah! Dragon Tiger Protective Seal!"

"Star Spiritual Aura!"

Both Wu Zongs were caught off guard. Before their minds could even react, their muscle memory had already taken defensive action.

One of the Wu Zongs cast a seal, and silhouettes of a dragon and a tiger appeared around him, forming a huge seal.

The other Wu Zong released elemental force from every single pore on its body continuously, forming a protective energy shield around him.

The martial arts from Da Qian were still far more superior than

that of the Yuan and Wu Countries in the mainland.

Even these two Wu Zong migrants skills were rather impressive. They had the Second Elemental Force!

They would be among the best of the best if placed together with the Wu Zongs in the mainland!

However, Fang Yuan didn't care much. Exerting more force, he struck his fists out!

What a fist!

The silhouette of the dragon and tiger disappeared upon touch, and the defensive shield made up of elemental force was broken!

This kind of power was enough to be considered destructive!

"Ah!"

"You..."

"Bang! Bang!"

Both Wu Zongs turned pale and spat out a mouthful of blood. Being struck by the fists, there were countless sounds of fractures coming from their body. Like a dead snake, they fell to the ground!

"Die!"

Fang Yuan swiftly approached the city master of Descending Star City and struck his claw out.

"Ah!"

His expression changed as he quickly retreated.

He was filled with regret!

Never would he have thought that the weak Wu Zong in front of him that he was about to capture would suddenly transform into a powerful demon!

"Soaring Green Dragon, change!"

The good thing was that the death of the other two Wu Zongs

bought him some time.

This city master was also a spiritual knight himself. As he recited his spiritual mantra, he altered the array.

Previously, he caught Fang Yuan by surprise and altered the array based on the map. However, now that Fang Yuan was on guard, it would be much more troublesome to alter it once more. Therefore, he decided to cast the array on himself instead of Fang Yuan!

"Whoosh!"

After a flash, he disappeared and managed to dodge from Fang Yuan's claws. He appeared at the edge of the square.

"You are dead! No one can save you in my Four Elements Spiritual Array!"

He appeared serious and cast a technique once again. "Split!"

"Weng!"

As the air shook, Fang Yuan could feel that the natural elemental energy was slowly segregated from him, until there was none of it left.

"Pressure!"

The city master pointed at Fang Yuan, and following which, a huge pressure akin to a mountain started to fall on him. This resulting in a creaking sound on his spiritual armour followed by an uncomfortable screech.

"Is this the power of an array?"

As he felt the huge pressure piling up on him, he felt as though the entire world was against him. With that thought, he laughed to himself heartily.

Previously, he had only seen an array designed to trap. Furthermore, it was only an array map and was similar to the Immovable Array which was sold to him. How could it compare to

the huge protective array cast over Descending Star City that was maintained by countless spiritual array masters?

"City master! You have only used the altering technique in the array and even sent out Wu Zongs to capture me. This only means one thing. You are not willing to move this array too much. Could it be due to the fact that the damage on this array has yet to be repaired?"

"Plus... Although the map you gave me was accurate, you had hidden a spiritual tracer inside to locate me, is that right?"

He spoke with confidence. With the experience gained from accessing Zhang Kongfan's memories and his previous experience with spiritual arrays, he could quickly identify the problems. As he threw the map on his hands away, the city master's expression changed.

If he knew that this would have happened, he should have sacrificed one of his men. At least, the situation wouldn't escalate to what it was now.

Not only did he lose two Wu Zongs, he had made a new enemy!

Since Fang Yuan was now his enemy, he had no other choice but to risk it all and destroy him here.

Withstanding the huge pressure, Fang Yuan placed his hands behind his back and stood up straight.

"The purpose of this array is to protect against people from outside. By altering the array and putting me in the centre, you are not using it to its fullest potential. Are you not worried that the damage would become more severe... and that the spiritual array would be destroyed in the end?"

"You think too much of yourself!"

The city master showed a black face. "Considering the foundations of my protective spiritual array, do you think that you, as a weak Meridian Opening Wu Zong, can destroy the whole

array?"

"White Tiger Killer Technique! Seven Death Ultimatum, go!"

"Roar! Roar!"

Amidst the roaring, white fog from the surroundings came together to form the shape of a huge tiger. It snared its fangs and appeared ferocious.

Following its tiger instincts, it pounced forward and swiped its claws at Fang Yuan.

It was already majestic to begin with. With support from the array, it was even more powerful!

"Good!"

Fang Yuan laughed out loud. As he mustered his Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique, his physical body appeared normal but the energy level within him was surging. Quickly, he mimicked a huge eagle as he let out a long chirp.

"Giant Eagle Claw!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

As the eagle's claw met with the tiger's claw, the eagle's claw disappeared.

The white tiger was left shocked and was dazed for a moment. As its body glowed, it swiped another claw towards Fang Yuan.

"The animal is part of the array... it is still not as instinctive as a real beast!"

Fang Yuan rushed forward and the pressure on his body was no more. Quickly, he arrived at the head of the white tiger. "I'll... destroy!!!"

"Rumble!"

Amidst a huge roar, he struck a fist on the tiger's head.

The tiger was stunned and its claws froze in mid-air. In a daze, it

collapsed.

"Whoosh!"

The entire Descending Star City shook, and cracks resembling spider webs were formed on the city walls.

"You..."

The city master was in despair. "You even know about arrays?"

He could tell from the weird steps that Fang Yuan took that he had already identified the weakness in the array. Following which, he timed it nicely to end of the tiger and the array in one punch.

Otherwise, how would such a ferocious beast succumb to a single punch?

Furthermore, this had led to the cracks on a part of the city walls!

The city master's face turned green.

"Soaring Green Dragon, Black Tortoise Groundbreaking Technique, White Tiger Killer Technique... All three techniques, go!"

"Roar!"

The dragon and tiger's roar could be heard, and the ground shook as a black tortoise appeared. Three silhouettes appeared once more as they surrounding Fang Yuan.

This was the power of arrays!

Without destroying the foundation of the array, all these attacks would be continuous.

Even though it was temporarily damaged, it could be repaired quickly.

"How can you foolishly think you can go against the power of Heaven and Earth?"

The city master's voice was heard. "Since you are a Meridian Opening Wu Zong, I now believe that you come from the South..."

Give up and let me restrain you. I might spare your life!"

From all that has happened, he felt that his own skill in casting arrays had dramatically improved.

If the array was perfect, there would not be any weaknesses for Fang Yuan to exploit.

However, with the weaknesses in place, and the continuous techniques that he had to execute, it was as though he was training himself. Therefore, it would be normal for his skill in casting arrays to improve drastically.

"Whoosh!"

Suddenly, Fang Yuan was all over the place. He was using his Shadowstep and once again arrived at the array beast's head. "You have missed out on something. You're too careless, city master! Giant Eagle Claw!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

As the figure of an eagle formed behind him, his energy was shocking, and it was as though he was like a ball of fire. Rushing into the array of beasts, the wings of the eagle swiped at the white tiger, the claws of the eagle striking the green dragon and the beak of the eagle pecked at the black tortoise. With a shriek, the black tortoise disappeared.

"Rumble!"

The entire Descending Star City shook as though there was a mini earthquake.

Many buildings were tilted as the ground cracked open.

This had never happened before, and this made many of them feel as though the end of the world was coming.

"This is impossible..."

"How can the protective array fail?"

In Sambhogakaya Monastery.

Kongming the Godly Monk opened his eyes in curiosity. "How is this possible?"

The instability of the array must be due to the fact that the city master was drawing energy from the energy source of the array, coupled with the fact that the array had suffered damage!

Based on what he knew, the city master had spent quite a lot of effort in plotting against Fang Yuan. He had even called for the help of two Wu Zongs, and therefore was rather confident that nothing would go wrong!

"If the protective array were to be destroyed, the entire city will crumble and there will no longer be any signs of life..."

Unknowingly, an image of a young boy appeared in front of Kongming the Godly Monk.

"All of you wait here. I have to go out and take a look!"

With a look of determination, he stood up, bowed and disappeared swiftly.

...

"Three of them..."

The city master was in desolation. With a heartless look, he continued. "You forced me to do this! Vermilion Bird from the South! Come out!"

In order to gain resistance from the chilly winds and cold weather, the city master was well-versed in fire-type techniques.

However, the damaged portion of the array was from the Vermilion Bird. Therefore, if there was no need, it was not advisable to activate it.

However, against Fang Yuan, he had to reveal his final move!

"Chirp! Chirp!"

As a fiery glow flashed past, a giant inferno bird appeared. As the flames burned continuously on its wings, the bird let out a distinct chirp.

"Vermilion Bird from the South?"

Fang Yuan froze.

The power of this spiritual beast was much greater than the three illusionary beasts that he had fought previously.

"Weng! Weng!"

Not just that, but there was also a brightly-glowing diamond on the head of this Vermilion Bird.

This was the energy source! The energy source of the entire Four Elements Spiritual Array!

Chapter 209: Compassion

Descending Star City!

This city was a piece of barren land in the past. There were no traces of human life, and it was a disaster-stricken place.

One day, a group of people arrived here.

There were migrants from Da Qian Empire. Because of their own reasons, they had to leave the empire to start afresh in rural places in hopes of survival.

They were the ancestors of the city master of Descending Star City and Kongming the Godly Monk!

They wanted to traverse through the icy gorges but were afraid of being trapped in there. Therefore, they had no choice but to settle down and faced the continuous threat from the cold and brutal weather, and the beasts native to the icy plains.

Finally, there came a day.

A piece of asteroid landed on the plains.!

All it took was one night for the entire barren piece of land to change. The land became much more fertile and they could now plant all types of plants.

Furthermore, at the position where the asteroid landed, there was a huge surge in energy.

The array masters among the migrants could feel it, and from there designed a South Vermilion Fiery Array to separate themselves from the cold. They were the ones who started everything.

Soon after, from the contributions of their descendants, a few array techniques were added to the initial array, forming the Four Elements Spiritual Array. Furthermore, they dug a lake on the position where the asteroid landed in remembrance of the miracle

the asteroid brought to them. This was why the city was named Descending Star City!

Therefore, the Vermilion Bird from the South was the core of the entire Four Elements Spiritual Array. It had the energy of the asteroid!

This was the myth behind the name of Descending Star City.

And now, the myth has turned into reality!

The simplest of all arrays; the Vermilion Fiery Array, and the energy source are now in front of Fang Yuan!

"Rumble!"

The shocking tongues of flame and the heat from it were making Fang Yuan dizzy.

The eyes of the Vermilion Bird were filled with life, and the three dead animals which appeared previously was nothing compared to it.

"Good! Good! Good!"

Fang Yuan appeared serious and complimented.

"This Vermilion Fiery Array is the only real array. You descendants don't know the true power of it and added three extra animals making the Four Elements Spiritual Array. However, all of you are not highly skilled enough, and therefore are just making useless additions to the array!"

"You..."

As the city master heard him, his pulled a long face - he was one of those who made the useless additions!

"Small boy, what do you know... If we didn't form the Four Elements Spiritual Array, how would we be able to protect such a huge area of land like the Descending Star City... But why do I have to explain all these to you? You are about to be burnt alive by the Vermilion Bird!"

He had a ferocious look as he exclaimed.

"So it's your greed!"

Fang Yuan sighed softly. "There are no problems with the Vermilion Fiery Array. The problem is with your insatiable greed!"

As he replied, he rushed forward and his hands formed claws. "Giant Eagle Claw!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Accompanying a high-pitched chirp, a giant claw appeared as it struck down towards the city master.

"Rumble!"

As the Vermilion Bird witnessed the claw, it swiped its wings.

A circle of flames appeared, forming a wall around the city master.

"Haha... It's useless! I am still under the protection of the Four Elements Spiritual Array. Your opponent is the Vermilion Bird!"

The city master laughed heartily as he altered the array once again.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Vermilion Bird let out a long chirp. As the energy source on its head glowed, it spread its wings and spread a wave of flames towards Fang Yuan.

"Weng! Weng!"

As the asteroid shook, it became dimmer.

"Rumble!"

The Descending Star City shook once more.

Cracks continued to form on the city walls, and the spiritual inscriptions started to disappear.

"Roar! Roar!"

"Hiss! Hiss!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

...

Suddenly, there was a roar from the storm outside. In the icy plains, there were a few huge shadows appearing.

It was a huge beast from the icy plains. It had a huge body and bloodshot eyes that let out a ferocious glow.

"Chatter!"

"Chatter!"

...

On the city walls, the guards were chattering their teach in fear, and could not even hold their weapons properly. "Icy... Icy beasts attacking the city?"

"How is this possible? We have the protective array, and they cannot come close..."

From a long time ago, the claim that Descending Star City was impregnable was the emotional support for many of the people living in the city.

"How could this happen?"

Amidst the chaotic crowd, Yu Jian held on to Li Hu's hands tightly. "Isn't Descending Star City the safest place?"

"I have no idea. It might be due to the fact that the protective array is having some problems. I'm sure the people in the city will resolve it..."

Li Hu's face was pale. He didn't even believe what he had just said, and his right hand started to grip tightly onto his knife.

"How did all of this happen?"

In the walls, a high-ranking general looked at the beast but was thinking all about what was happening inside the city. "City

master... You have miscalculated this time!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

In the centre of the centre, there was a sudden distinct chirp.

A pillar of fire suddenly appeared and rose up into the sky as it pierced through the clouds and headed towards the sun.

This was not a cause for celebration!

As the fiery ball of fire rose up, the spiritual inscriptions on the city walls became increasingly dimmer.

Finally, a huge icy gorilla, which was 3 storeys high, leapt onto the walls and started to pound on its chest!

"Rumble!"

It was destruction everywhere!

One portion of the city walls crumbled and fell down, revealing the streets and houses of the city!

"Keke!"

As the icy gorilla saw it, it stroked its arms, grabbed onto a soldier and started to feast on it.

"Ah... Save me, I don't want to die!"

Although the soldier had broken limbs, he was still alive and was wailing for help.

However, no one could react to what was happening.

There were still caught in a daze from the tremors.

"Amituofo!"

At this crucial point in time, a white silhouette flashed past.

The icy gorilla stopped whatever it was doing. Looking at its hands, the food that it was feasting on was long gone.

"That you for saving me, Godly Monk!"

On the city walls, Kongming the Godly monk slowly placed the soldier down. Looking at the icy gorilla, he was enraged.

"Aw! Aw!"

The icy gorilla did not care much. Instead, it pounded its fists on its chest once again and rushed towards Kongming the Godly Monk.

"The hidden King Kong, immovable like a mountain!"

Kongming the Godly Monk clasps his hand together before pushing it outwards. A faint golden glow appeared in his palms.

"Weng! Weng!"

As the golden glow in his palm intensified, it finally formed a swastika symbol. With that, he exerted the pressure out.

"Roar! Roar!"

The icy gorilla exclaimed in pity and retreated backwards as though it was being held down by a mountain. Soon after, there were golden flames appearing on its body, and it was a matter of seconds before it was engulfed in flames.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

An icy phoenix with three ice crystals on its tail appeared. Quickly, it flew by the icy gorilla.

"Whoosh!"

As the golden flames died out, the icy gorilla laid on the ground and sighed weakly. Together with its burnt fur, it was a comical scene to behold.

However, Kongming the Godly Monk could not laugh.

"Icy beasts with the cultivation level at the Elemental Gathering Stage? And not just one! Where did all of them come from?"

He was feeling unsure. With the meditation beads in hand, he walked to the crumbled wall and chanted six words:

"Weng! Ma! Ni! Bei! Mi! Hong!"

"Rumble!"

Rows of golden runes appeared on the two broken walls at the side. Slowly, they extended out and met in the centre, forming chains of Sanskrit covering where the broken wall once stood.

"Weng! Weng!"

Not just that, but golden runes appeared on every wall. They represented strength and eternal blessing.

"Thank you for saving our lives!"

A few Lieutenants rushed forward and thanked him.

"Amituofo!"

Kongming the Godly Monk shook his head. "I have only activated the restrictive power within the walls, which were placed there long ago by our ancestors. It can merely withstand the altering of the array and hold off the beasts outside for about an hour!"

He could not cast a new protective array over the entire city just by himself.

However, it was different at the walls. With the 'secret ingredient' added by their ancestors years ago, it was an inheritance left for the descendants in case of an emergency. This way, they could still take the geographical advantage.

Even as such, without the most important energy source, the array would not be able to last long.

'This place is barren and cannot be compared to Da Qian Empire. To maintain the array, we need to either use the energy source or... we have to use blood sacrifice...'

Kongming the Godly Monk held his meditation beads in one hand and fiddled with it. "Sins! All these sins!"

...

"It seems to be chaotic outside!"

Within the Vermilion Fiery Array, Fang Yuan looked embarrassed. His expression was one of disappointment. Suddenly, he laughed. "I knew it... You are crazy and don't even care about your city. How could you use energy from the entire city against me! Are you not afraid that your disciples and your relatives might be attacked by icy beasts?"

"That will not happen just yet. Our ancestors have left something within our walls to buy us some time in an event of an emergency..."

The city master looked serious. "Furthermore... This is all the time I need to kill you! Vermilion Bird!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

In front of Fang Yuan, the Vermilion Bird agreed to the city master and was extremely human-like. Facing Fang Yuan, it opened its beak.

"Rumble!"

"Rumble!"

As red flames burned, the extreme temperatures caused the ground to melt, forming puddles of gooey liquid.

"You are indeed crazy, and there's nothing I can do to help you..."

As the flame burnt through Fang Yuan's silhouette, it failed to burn Fang Yuan. His real body appeared on the other side as he shook his head and sighed. "City master, you are known to be noble. Are you going to continue to be lost in your own personal greed?"

"Of course... it is useless to tell you all these. This is because I have one reason to fight against you!"

In the array, a layer of bewildering fog appeared and spread out.

"And that reason is... The fact that you wanted to take advantage

of me! That means you deserve to die!"

As his imagery appeared everywhere, Fang Yuan's real body appeared in front of the city master.

In the face of death, even the Vermilion Bird was in a daze!

Chapter 210: Takeover

Everything would have a soul!

There would be a mountain god in the mountains, a water spirit in the rivers!

Even on pieces of lands, vast oceans, or even planets of worlds, each and every one of these entities would have their own spirits.

Even so, the minds of these spirits move extremely slow and might take up to a thousand years for a single thought! But they exist!

Since they have souls, we can interact with them and access their dreams!

This would be the origin of the cultivation of dream masters!

This also means that in the array lies an array spirit!

Of course, in small arrays, the spirit would be too weak, or it might have even have been developed yet.

However, on first sight, as Fang Yuan looked at the Vermilion Bird, he could confirm that the Vermilion Fiery Array had a living spirit in it!

If the spirit were to be the likes of those in huge mountains or in dead arrays, Fang Yuan would not be able to access their dreams as his ability was still limited.

However, this strong-spirited array was the perfect opportunity for Fang Yuan to strike!

This was similar to the fact that he could not access the dreams of normal plants, but managed to access the dreams of the Sickle Grass and Serrated Flower!

"Weng! Weng!"

In an instant, the fiery Vermilion Bird fell into a daze, and the

entire array came to a halt!

In the next moment, following the tremor of the asteroid, energy flowed back into the Vermilion Bird as it snapped out of its trance.

This was the moment Fang Yuan was waiting for!

This Vermilion Fiery Array had its weakness from the beginning. It was burdened by the other three elements, and after fighting with Fang Yuan for an extended period, Fang Yuan had already figured out the rules that the array would abide by, and the mysteries of the array.

This was the opportunity for Fang Yuan!

"Go!"

Fang Yuan executed his Shadowstep. After leaping on a few weak points on the array, he leapt over the fiery wall and arrived in front of the city master.

"You..."

The city master's expression was one of fury and shock. Just as he spoke a word, Fang Yuan exclaimed. "Die!"

It was a tremendous shout; akin to a tsunami!

In this shout, Fang Yuan not only used his secret technique but also infused in it the dream master's bewildering fog!

Facing this, even the city master, who was a spiritual knight, was dazed.

"Whoosh!"

This was the golden opportunity!

A Wu Zong was already extremely fast; a Meridian Opening Wu Zong was even more so!

In a few moments, he had already arrived in front of the city master as he struck his fist out.

"Bloop!"

A water bubble appeared as it spun in the air with spiritual inscriptions. It had a weird indentation as it blocked the punch for the city master.

"A time-sensitive spiritual treasure?"

Fang Yuan laughed cunningly. "Even this can't save you! Let the strength of 3 spiritual meridians strike!"

"Kacha! Kacha!"

Three spiritual meridians appeared on his body and disappeared quickly.

At the same time, there were popping sounds coming from his back. Like dominos, the popping sounds travelled down and finally reached his fists, bringing with it an immense amount of force.

"No!"

Finally, the city master was aware of what was happening. Quickly, he ordered the Vermilion Bird to come to his rescue.

But it was too late.

"Whoosh!"

A distinct sound was heard as the bubble popped, allowing Fang Yuan's fist to go through, landing on the city master's body.

After all, he was an array master! Not a Wu Zong!

The outcome was determined from the moment he had allowed a Meridian Opening Wu Zong to come close to him!

Even though the city master was wearing an inner armour and hung a talisman which glowed in spiritual light, all of it was no use!

With an angry grunt, Fang Yuan exploded in strength. In a matter of seconds, he had pushed his own limits.

This fist broke through the city master's robes and landed on his inner armour, forming a huge indentation.

At the same time, an intense tremor was felt through the inner armour and exploded within the city master's body.

"Mmm..."

The crown on the city master's head exploded. His hair was blown and his eyes, nose and ears were bleeding. As he opened his mouth, pieces of his internal organs came out.

There was no way of faking such a death; he was dead beyond hope.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan could detect a hint of elemental force on the corpse of the city master.

"His soul? His mind? Or his regrets?"

He smiled as his spiritual aura exploded like a burning sun,

"Chi! Chi!"

Suddenly, black smoke started to come out from the corpse, and with it was an intense screeching sound. Finally, the city master's face of resentment exploded.

"The utter destruction of your body and soul would mean that you are truly dead. If you can come back to life, I'll respect you!"

Fang Yuan sighed and looked at the Vermilion Fiery Array.

Although the city master had died, the Vermilion Bird was still a huge trouble for him.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

With the loss of its owner, the Vermilion Bird seemed to have calmed down and was no longer aggressive like before. Instead, it lazily walked about and occasionally pecked its own feathers.

All of its actions made it look like a real living bird, and no one would associate it with a dead array.

"Array techniques are trule impressive!"

Fang Yuan complimented as he walked ahead, trying to stroke its feathers.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

A pillar of flames appeared and started to burn the elemental force on Fang Yuan's hand.

Fang Yuan leapt away and waved his hands as a spiritual meridian appeared. Quickly, he extinguished the fire and repaired his armour.

Seeing that there was no more threat, its feathers stood down as it became a carefree bird.

"Without a person controlling the array, the fiery array is already impressive enough. It will balance itself out and defend itself from external threats!"

Fang Yuan was lost in his thoughts.

Based on his understanding of arrays, together with the experience he had just gained, he came to an unlikely solution.

"Dream accessing!"

Facing the spiritual array, he executed his dream-accessing technique once again.

The bewildering fog was the foundation for all dream masters. It would not cause harm to the subjects, and instead, had a soothing effect on them.

The Vermilion Bird did not react. However, based on its spirituality, it became dizzy but quickly composed itself as its own mind dispelled the resistance.

"Another time!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he attempted his techniques once more.

An extremely short dream soon appeared, and as he took on the

role of the Vermilion Bird, he witnessed the forming of Descending Star City and the efforts of the ancestors...

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Time passed. The Vermilion Bird spread its wings and comfortably fell into a deep sleep...

Fang Yuan walked up and lightly plucked at the asteroid.

"Whoosh!"

The asteroid, which was the energy source, was on Fang Yuan's hand.

"Hmm..."

The first thought that Fang Yuan had was that the piece of asteroid was heavy!

Extremely heavy!

After it stopped glowing, the asteroid was only as large as a fist, but it weighed a few thousand pounds!

If not for the fact that Fang Yuan's physical body was strengthened, he might not be able to lift it!

"All of the essence lies in this asteroid. It has an immense amount of energy, but after generations of failed leaders, most of its energy has been used up... This was also why the city master had to continuously supply blood to keep it going..."

Fang Yuan looked at the asteroid on his hand.

On the glittering side of it, there was a blood imprint, which appeared sinister.

"This object... has been made into a magical weapon..."

Fang Yuan was curious. "Furthermore... this object has no owner now. Through the Four Elements Spiritual Array, I might be able to take possession of it!"

It was obvious that the previous owner of the asteroid must be

the city master of Descending Star City!

The death of him would mean that the asteroid now had no owner.

More importantly, through dream accessing, Fang Yuan had gained a deeper understanding of the Four Elements Spiritual Array, to the extent that he might be the person who has the deepest understanding of it in the entire city!

Furthermore, the amount of elemental force he had was folds of normal Wu Zongs and spiritual knights.

With a simple release of energy, the asteroid had no resistance as his spiritual will marked an imprint on it.

"So... Do I have complete control over the Four Elements Spiritual Array now?"

Fang Yuan looked at the asteroid, not knowing if he should laugh or cry.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Vermilion Bird woke up and looked at him calmly.

"Return! Remove the restriction on the city, and continue protecting it!"

Fang Yuan used his spiritual will to command the Vermilion Bird.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Vermilion Bird let out a long chirp as it transformed into an inferno. Soon, it disappeared into the ground.

"Whoosh!"

In the square, the restriction was not lifted, and construction of the walls could be seen.

"City master, how could you recklessly use the energy from the asteroid? Don't you know that this would lead to... Cough..."

As the restriction was lifted, a bald man barged in impatiently and nagged.

Seeing Fang Yuan, he was in shock as his expression was one of disbelief. "It's you?!"

"That's right, It's me! Are you disappointed?"

Fang Yuan mocked him as he tossed the asteroid into the air.

Looking at him toying with the asteroid, Kongming the Godly Monk turned pale. Suddenly, he appeared fearful, greedy, compassionate... all sorts of expression flashed across his face.

"I'm Kongming, greetings to you, city master!"

After changing his expression countless times, he clenched his teeth and reluctantly knelt down.

"City master?"

Fang Yuan didn't know if he should laugh or not.

"Regardless of who it is, whoever has possession over the asteroid and control over the protective array shall be the rightful owner of Descending Star City!"

Kongming replied without hesitation.

He was a smart monk. Seeing that Fang Yuan had taken possession of the asteroid, he knew that the lives of everyone in the city were in his hands.

Afraid that Fang Yuan would run away after taking the asteroid, he quickly gave him the appointment as city master, in hopes that with the power and responsibility, he could convince this highly skilled person to stay.

Why not forcefully take it back?

Even the mighty city master with control over the Four Elements Spiritual Array and other resources couldn't last against him. How would he even dare to try?

"You're a smart person!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. "However... what about the fact that you lied to me..."

"I was useless and could not tell that you were highly skilled. I'll make myself blind!"

With a face of determination, Kongming smashed his eyes, and dark-red blood started to ooze out.

To pay the price of lying to Fang Yuan, he completed blinded himself.

"Very well!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. With another toss, the asteroid became a flash of light and burrowed underground.

On the city walls, there were glows of lights chasing away the icy beasts. With that came the cheering from inside of the city walls.

"Thank you, city master!"

Kongming the Godly Monk placed his hands together and displayed a face of serenity.

Chapter 211: The Aftermath

"Finally... It's over?"

Within the rubble, Yu Jian crawled out. He was left stunned as he witnessed the burning inferno and the blood everywhere.

"Yup... It's over!"

Li Hu finally let go of his knife. Looking at the glowing walls, he let out an expression of disbelief. "Who would've known that even Descending Star City would experience such a thing!"

"I've heard from Lord that..."

Yu Jian's eyes glittered. The strength of a country is not determined by its geographical location, but by the heart of the people!"

"Heart of the people?"

Li Hu looked at the mess and was deep in his own thoughts.

"That's right. I want to go back!"

Li Hu clenched his fist. "I want to transform our village to become the strongest, to the extent that even beasts native to the icy plains wouldn't dare to attack us! I want to make it become the second Descending Star Country!"

This young man, for unknown reasons, had given up on the plan to move to Descending Star City and had set a new goal for himself.

"Mm... That's good! But before that..."

Li Hu didn't feel normal at all. "Should we treat our own injuries before meeting up with our fellow villagers?"

"Eh?"

At this point in time, Yu Jian realised that he had an open wound on his leg; so deep that even his bone could be seen. With a cry, he

laid on the floor helplessly...

...

"So this is the city master's mansion?"

At the same time, Fang Yuan placed his hands behind his back like the owner as he looked at the large plot of land that was under construction.

"That's right..."

By his side, the blind Kongming was guiding him respectfully like a servant.

"Based on what I know, this is the location of all the treasure vaults of the past city masters!"

"Oh? So their all mine now!"

Fang Yuan laughed jokingly. "What do you think I should do as to take over the old city master's influence as soon as possible?"

Kongming the Godly Monk gave it a deep thought. "The old city master had two Wu Zongs as his sidekicks. However, both of them are dead now. Array masters wise, other than him, I'm the only one left, and I can convince the other spiritual disciples for you... Therefore, the only thing you have to do is to call for the high ranking officials of the city and show them your skills. Soon you will be able to rule them with fear!"

"I see!"

Fang Yuan looked around. There were already many nervous soldiers surrounding him.

"However, I think a direct method would be better!"

With the wave of his hands, the entire city master's mansion shook.

"Roar! Roar!"

"Aw! Aw!"

The green dragon, white tiger and black tortoise all appeared, taking three corners of the mansion.

Although they worth nothing in Fang Yuan's eyes, they were akin to the Gods to the people of the city. They were the proof of power!

"What's happening?"

"Is this... the Three Elements Spiritual Array?"

"Didn't the city master went off to deal with the Wu Zong? Why would he be surrounding the mansion?"

...

There was too much commotion and many martial artists filled the mansion. All of them were at the peak of the 12th Gate and were all spiritual disciples of array masters. Seeing that Fang Yuan was the one manipulating the array, their expression changed.
"Why is it you? Where's city master?"

"City master?"

Fang Yuan smiled. "From today onwards, I am the city master! Those who follow me shall live, and those who are against me shall die! Kneel before me!"

"Crazy!"

"You're a madman!"

"This person is possessed!"

"But why is Kongming the Godly Monk following him... sh*t, we have to really kneel!"

...

As the high ranking officials looked at each other, none of them had a good feeling about this.

The few unimportant people at the sides were shocked and excused themselves.

"Roar!"

As the green dragon swung its tail, a 12th Gate Martial Artist was flung to the wall and became a pile of bloody mess.

"Roar! Roar!"

On the other end of the mansion, the white tiger roared and as its claws landed, it sliced through a martial artist which was attempting to run away.

"Don't kill me, don't kill me!"

A female martial artist knelt down. "I am willing to follow you!"

With the first, many others followed suit as they bowed down.

...

After a moment.

In the study, Kongming the Godly Monk let out a soft sigh.

"What's the matter? Do you think I overdid it?"

Fang Yuan was flipping through a martial arts manual. In it were the recordings of 'Dragon Tiger Protective Seal'. He looked up and smiled.

"The way you did it was direct and struck fear in all of them. Of course, it's effective! However, it might be a little extreme and therefore it would be hard for you to win over their hearts for you to rule of the city properly in the future..."

Kongming the Godly Monk reminded him, as though he was truly thinking for Fang Yuan's sake.

"I understand the difference in use hard and soft tactics..."

Fang Yuan opened the windows and looked at the world outside.

If he were to stretch out his hand, the entire city would be at his disposal.

But how could this city compare to Secluded Country?

He couldn't even care less about Secluded Country. Why would

he give up his dreams and ambitions for the sake of this small city?

"How would the normal understand the ambitions of the noble..."

He shook his head and continued. "We'll check out the treasure vault later!"

"Yes, Sir!"

Kongming the Godly Monk bit on his lips and was dismissed, much to his reluctance.

Leaving Fang Yuan to the entire study, a glow appeared on his hands and a few ancient books disappeared.

"Mm... There are a few good martial arts manuals in this study, not forgetting the scrolls which detailed the techniques of casting spiritual arrays. From all of these, I can train up a spiritual array master myself... Of course, the most important would be these maps. They would allow me to figure out the rest of the path to Da Qian Empire..."

After reaping from the study, Fang Yuan arrived at the city master's treasure vault.

This was almost half of all the treasures the city master once had.

However, it was a pity that Fang Yuan were not appreciative of most of the treasure.

"Eh?"

At one corner, he discovered a small surprise.

"Is this.... an Elemental Crystal?

It was the size of his thumb and was translucent, and the discovery brought much joy to Fang Yuan.

This was a commonly used treasure in the martial arts world of Da Qian Empire. It had the ability to quickly replenish a Wu Zong or spiritual knights elemental energy, and could also be the energy

source for arrays or spiritual weapons. Therefore, it was highly sought after.

"Although its quality seems average and it can only be considered a low-grade elemental crystal, the good thing is that there is a lot of it. These few thousands of it is worth quite a fortune if I remember correctly in Yang Fan's memories... let's move it all out!"

With the Mountain River Pearl in hand, Fang Yuan kept everything that was there.

"Even if it was rubbish, it would have its value. Anyway, I have an infinite storage space in the Mountain River Pearl, and I'll just put in everything that I can..."

When Kongming the Godly Monk returned, he was stunned. Even a beggar would cry if he entered the treasure vault now.

"City master, you..."

Although he was blind, he had a strong spiritual will and knew what had happened. "You don't have to do this even if you had a spiritual treasure that could store items, right?"

"Alright!"

Fang Yuan was satisfied. With a mischievous look, he continued. "By using my authority as the city master of Descending Star City, I will now give my first order!"

"Yes, Sir!"

Kongming suddenly became serious as he bowed.

"Mm, I shall appoint you as the city master. When I'm not around, you shall handle everything in Descending Star City!"

With the wave of his hand, a glow appeared from the ground. The asteroid appeared, and it became imprinted with Kongming's spiritual aura as well.

In reality, this was giving him the authority to manipulate the Four Elements Spiritual Array.

"What? You're leaving?"

Kongming had already guessed it from the beginning and could confirm it now.

Fang Yuan did not care about the state of the city as he was about to leave!

However, he did not keep the asteroid with him, and this was a sign that he had given the city dwellers a chance to live on.

"Of course... Descending Star City cannot satisfy my ambitions!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands and left without hesitation.

"Eh..."

Kongming's eye socket looked at Fang Yuan as he left, and he sighed.

It was envious to see how Fang Yuan could be unmoved by external enticements.

It was a pity that he was a monk and therefore could never reach the stage that Fang Yuan was at.

If hell was not empty, he would not become a god peacefully! This was not only an oath, it was also his way of living!

...

Outside Descending Star City.

Fang Yuan opened up a piece of map.

This was from the personal collection of the old city master and was much more detailed than the one he gave to Fang Yuan previously.

"To reach Da Qian, I will have to traverse through 13 Dangers. Among these 13 Dangers, only three are suitable for people to live in. These places have their own city lakes and are the Vast Desert, the Death Corridor, and the Hell of Thousand Ghosts..."

Fang Yuan shook his head.

The ancestors of the old city master and Kongming the Godly Monk were the group of migrants who settled down the furthest from Da Qian Empire. They were only an icy gorge away from the mainland in the South but were thousands of miles away from Da Qian.

"As long as I know the direction to head towards, it's alright!"

Fang Yuan was extremely confident about this.

He had made it through the most arduous icy gorge. If the ancestors of Descending Star City could make it through the 13 Dangers, he should not have much problem doing the same.

"Let's go!"

Taking one last look at Descending Star City, Fang Yuan turned his back and left.

At the gates.

Yu Jian and Li Hu were escorting goods out of the city. With a look of grief, they too slowly left the city.

Although they had received help from an anonymous benefactor which helped them sell their goods and even receive a huge amount of compensation, a few villagers still died gruesomely from the disaster which struck the city.

In response, a group of villagers could only keep their corpse properly. No one was in the mood to talk about revenge, and the entire caravan back was solemn.

"Ah... this is all fate!"

Li Hu sighed. "Let's go! Even though some of our villagers have died, we will still split the profits and earnings with their families!"

"Naturally!"

The other villagers would also hope for their families to receive their share if they were the ones to be met with unfortunate incidents. Therefore, all of them agreed and gave an appreciative

look towards Li Hu.

As the leader, Li Hu seemed matured. Looking at Yu Jian, he commented. "Let's go, stop reading your book..."

"Oh, alright!"

From the incidents, Yu Jian had also matured. Closing the book, his hands were still shivering. "I'm coming!"

In his heart, he was utterly shocked. 'Martial arts manual! This is much more impressive than the ones in the village! Indeed, treasures are only found in dangers...'

Looking at Descending Star City for the final time, he had mixed emotions. 'Descending Star City... I will be back!'

Chapter 212: Desert City

In the Vast Deserts.

Compared to the brutal cold and unforgiving winter in Descending Star City, this place was scorching hot; it was the exact opposite of the previous icy world.

The desert stretched beyond the horizon. Together with the harsh environments, it was a place almost uninhabitable for life.

Unless one would ride the desert native 'Fire Resistant Camel', it would be nearly impossible to go through the desert.

"Ring! Ring!"

Accompanying the bells on the camels, a caravan appeared in the heatwave. All of them wore a scarf as a precaution against sandstorms. Everyone was solemn and it was like a row of zombies walking - they were trying to reduce their energy consumption and were avoiding all unnecessary action.

The Fire Resistant Camel was almost twice the size of a normal camel and had three humps on its back. Its fur was a fiery red and it would shimmer under the bright sunlight.

As the sunlight and heat reflected off the camel's fur, it was absorbed the next moment, making its fur even brighter.

Although these Fire Resistant Camels were not spiritual animals, they had a mind on their own and their fur was highly sought after on the market.

The caravan consisting of tens of these fire resistance camels were already considered a fortune among the desert dwellers.

There were only a few organisations in the desert with such a fortune.

A white camel was on the flag of the caravan, and it was majestic looking.

White Camel Caravan!

This was one of the top caravans in the Vast Deserts and was famous in the vicinity.

"Father... look!"

It was noon and the sun was hanging in the sky. The scorching heat waves were creating refractions in mid-air, and their visions were distorted.

A camel rider was looking around and suddenly opened his mouth wide as he looked at a distance.

"Hmm?"

His father was an experienced warrior. With his sharp eyesight, he was stoned as well as he looked into the depths of the desert.

In the middle of the desert, there was a layer of white and it appeared a little translucent, as though it was melting under the hot sun.

This was the White Desert; the place of extremes. Even the Fire Resistant Camel could not walk out of it alive.

However, at this point in time, a black silhouette walked out of the White Desert.

"This is not an illusion!"

The entire caravan was shocked. Some of the businessmen flipped down from their camels and bowed in respect towards the black figure.

"To conquer the White Desert... If he is not a god, then he must be a devil!"

The warriors mumbled to themselves as they held onto their scimitars. Slowly, they became increasingly anxious.

"Whoooo!"

As the scorching wind blew, the black figure slowly approached

and revealed itself to be a man.

He was wearing a white robe with red flowers sewn on it, and a bamboo hat on his head. Although he was slow, with every step, he would seemingly float forward like how a deity would move.

"Phew... It's a person?"

As the person arrived in front of the caravan, he removed his hat, revealing a young face. It was Fang Yuan!

"This is great! Finally, it is possible to walk out of this d*mned desert!"

He nodded his head and revealed his excitement.

Thinking about the journey he had embarked on, he was filled with emotions.

From the time he had left Descending Star City, months had already flown by!

With his martial arts and his skills, together with the map from the old city master of Descending Star City, he rushed his way and traversed through ten over dangers.

Compared to the danger in the icy gorge, this was nothing. However, the long journey slowly made Fang Yuan tired.

Furthermore, he had several weird encounters on his journey here.

For instance, in the Hell of Thousand Ghosts, he had met with a ferocious ghost which was a few hundred feet tall. If not for the fact that the ghost was not interested in the puny him, he might have to wait it out there.

Other than the ferocious ghost, he had also encountered three tribes which were made up of weird people, as well as fierce beasts from the legends... With his abilities and a little bit of luck, he managed to pass every obstacle safely and did not die in there.

Now, he had arrived at the Vast Deserts.

Due to the fact that he was tired of rushing, he had chosen the shortest path; to cut across the White Desert.

It was also in the White Desert where he met the rumoured Golden Giants Tribe and was almost forced to death. Only by using his dream master's Shadowstep and the teachings of spiritual arrays did he successfully escape from there.

Now that he finally could see the existence of normal people, he was extremely excited.

"Since there are people here, Desert City must be close by..."

Fang Yuan recalled the map of the city master of Descending Star City. "After crossing Desert City and the Three World Mountain, I will be able to reach Da Qian..."

After dividing the mountain into three portions, the mountain was nicknamed 'Three World Mountain'!

Not only was the place the boundary of Da Qian, it was rumoured to have isolated a separate world filled with perilous dangers within.

To put it in other words, an unknown world would be the most feared!

"The fact that many migrants have successfully traversed through the Three World Mountain meant that if I could find the correct way, the dangers of Three World Mountain would be negligible compared to the icy gorge, but I still cannot neglect it... Furthermore, looking at the current state that I'm in, I must clean myself and take a rest first!"

"Desert City is a favourable place!"

After Fang Yuan snapped out of his thoughts, all he could see was the weird looking group of Fire Resistant Camels.

On the camel's backs were many huge boxes that appeared heavy. It was obvious that this was a caravan, and on the flag which was

on the box, there was the figure of a white camel. Half of the caravan were sincere and bowed down towards him, while the other half were being threatened as they wielded their scimitars, with a look of fear in their eyes as they were on full alert.

This was especially so for a young man. His legs were bent and as they shivered, his hand was on his scimitar. He was at lost as to what he should do and appeared comical.

"All of you... are all of you guarding against me?"

Fang Yuan smiled and released some energy as he asked.

"Whooo!"

The wind picked up. As soon as he finished his sentence, a sandstorm started to brew. The hot air stirred up the sand, and the camels retreated.

"Sandstorm?"

A young rider went pale and fainted.

"He is a god who is capable of controlling the weather! We cannot go against him!"

The few who were already kneeling down were superstitious and started to nag at the rest.

"Good martial arts cultivation!"

A few of them in the caravan were smart.

One of them was the father of the young man. He was the leader of the escorts, and his beard was braided. He placed his weapon down and greeted Fang Yuan respectfully. "Sir... We are from the White Camel Caravan. If you have any requests, we will try to accede to it!"

He was clear about one thing.

The person in front of him was not a god, but an extremely powerful Wu Zong!

He was much stronger than himself, and if he were to be infuriated, the entire caravan might not be able to survive!

Therefore, in order to survive, he would not hold back to do anything for Fang Yuan.

"Mm. I need a guide, a local guide!"

Fang Yuan replied.

"I, A Xiuda, am willing to serve you, the highly skilled warrior who is able to traverse the White Desert!"

As soon as he heard his request, the man with the braided beard quickly knelt before him and humbly replied.

"Very well!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and remained silent.

...

"Ah!"

Amidst the commotion, one of A Xiuda's sons screamed as he woke up from his slumber. Looking around and seeing that everyone was looking at him, his face turned red.

He realised that the caravan had already continued to make its way. One of the riders by his side smiled and tossed over a bag of wine. "Are you frightened? A sip of strong wine will help!"

"Thank you!"

He took the bag of wine, opened the cap and drank it heartily. At that moment, he could feel as though flames were burning from his throat down to his stomach.

After becoming a little drunk, the fear he had was gone.

Only now did he realise and he started to ask. "Is that... the devil who walked out of the White Desert?"

"Pa!"

As soon as he said those words, a knife cheek was slapped across his face.

"Father... why did you hit me?"

Seeing that it was A Xiuda who hit him, the young man's tantrum was gone, and he could only hold his head and ask.

"J*rk! That is not a devil, but the honourable Fang Yuan Sir!"

A Xiuda had a serious look on his face and in his eyes.

The young man turned around and saw that in the middle of the caravan, all the good were cleared off the camel's back. In place of the goods was a small table and wine, and a person was riding on the camel with luxury. It was the devil!

No, rather, he was Fang Yuan Sir.

He was very young and seemed to be of the same age as himself. It was unbelievable that he was able to traverse the White Desert and its harsh environmental conditions!

At this point in time, it seemed that the person had already noticed someone looking at him. He moved his eyes to meet his own, and he smiled.

The young man shivered in fear. With the smile of the devil, his hands started to shiver.

A Xiuda sighed as he saw this.

Phobia and fear was the best weapon to destroy a person!

When he was younger, he once had a companion that was like that as well. His companion was able to kill lions and tigers while he was younger. However, once, his companion and another friend encountered a scary incident and all the guards were killed, only leaving his companion and his friend. From that day onwards, his friend had a phobia and lost his sanity. Although his companion was still sane, he had a fear for the desert, and even the act of lifting a weapon would make his hands shake in fear - as an escort,

he was useless now. He could only dwell in the Vast Deserts and provide re-supplies and reinforcements for people entering the Vast Deserts. He got married and had a few children, and soon after had a happy life.

'My Da Daer... you can surely walk out of this phobia!'

Looking at his own sun, he had a worrying look, but he did not dare to do anything to Fang Yuan; he could only pray in silence.

As the caravan walked for half a day, the vast desert with no ends was no more as the caravan was greeted with a sea of green.

A huge green lake was seen. It was the intersection of many rivers, and from there a beautiful lake was formed.

On the edge of the lake, a huge city with walls built from bricks appeared.

Although it did not seem attractive from afar, it was still a miracle, taking into account the fact that this was a desert.

"Whoo! Whoo..."

"Aw! Aw..."

Several guys cheered.

Their caravan had travelled long and they had finally reached home.

Chapter 213: Three Worlds

Standing tall on the land of green was Desert City. Under the brilliance of the sunlight, the city was coated in gold.

It was like a compassionate mother; with open arms, it was as though it was welcoming the tired traveller.

The buildings in Desert City were mostly one storey high. They were built of wood and the windows were small. Most of the people on the streets were escorts wearing their martial artist suit.

Of course, there were also caravans from all around, and dancing ladies who were dressed beautifully.

"Sir! This is the headquarters of the White Camel Caravan."

As the caravan trotted ahead, they arrived at an octagonal-shaped building which appeared luxurious.

A Xiuda ran into the building. Not long after, an old man with treasures in his hands slowly walked out under the escort of 8 servants.

In front of him, several child servants in white were laying out a golden-coloured wool carpet.

"Welcome, our guest from afar!"

The old man with a white beard welcomed Fang Yuan with open hands, as though he had heard of him before. "I am the leader of White Camel Business Council, Bai Santong. Greetings, Fang Yuan Sir!"

"Oh?"

Fang Yuan felt weird. "You are... a migrant from Da Qian?"

"My ancestors are indeed from Da Qian Empire!"

Bai Santong laughed. "In fact, most of the dwellers in Desert City have made it through the Three World. However, most of them

have started a family with people of different backgrounds, resulting in our unique culture..."

"I see!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head without saying more.

Bai Santong, on the other hand, did not dare to let his guard down.

Since he was able to traverse through the White Desert, he must be a highly skilled Wu Zong!

Furthermore, he was here to continue his journey through the hellish environments after the White Desert. He must be someone powerful!

"May I know if you need any help? If we can help, we will surely do so!"

Bai Santong placed his fists together and enquired respectfully.

"Very simple... I want information regarding the Three World Mountain! Of course, I will reward you!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands. A jade bottle flew across and landed on Bai Santong's hands.

"This is... spiritual pill?"

Bai Santong took out a pill and was left stunned.

Fang Yuan was secretly laughing inside.

Alchemy masters and spiritual array masters were not common, and even more so for rural areas like these. With their limited resources, the price of spiritual pills would soar.

This would worth more than even gold outside.

"Don't worry, Sir!"

Bai Santong kept the spiritual pills properly. With added respect, he continued. "I will gather all information regarding Three World Mountain and present it to you!"

I was already worth it for him to risk his life for the spiritual pills! Gathering information was an easy task, and one would be stupid to not do it for the pills.

If not for the fact that he was a respectable person here, Fang Yuan wouldn't have let him have such a good deal.

'I only have to... gather information regarding the Three World Mountain...'

Bai Santong dismissed himself and invited Fang Yuan to join his business council, and his mind was filled with curiosity. "To gather information regarding Three World Mountain. Could this person have the intention to entire Da Qian Empire? Seriously..."

He did not know what to say.

They escaped out of Da Qian and were fugitives. As long as their enemies were inside Da Qian Empire, they would not dare to return.

Needless to say, to enter Three World Mountain from the other way would be much harder than any normal human could do.

Because of these two reasons, even though they were the closest city, no one in Desert City would have such a crazy thought.

But now, there was such a person!

'Regardless, as long as I keep him happy and keep the spiritual pills coming, that is enough...'

As Bai Santong thought to himself, there was a look of determination in his eyes.

...

Three days later.

In the headquarters of White Camel Business Council, within a luxurious room.

The floor was covered in golden wool carpet. A concubine was

dancing on the carpet barefooted.

Fang Yuan leaned against the silk cloth lazily.

In front of him were a few concubines revealing their white arms. They were fighting for the chance to serve him wine and other delicacies.

"Wine made from grapes served in a wine glass! This life... it's not too bad!"

Fang Yuan gulped down a cup of red wine as his face began to flush.

Within the grapes, there was a mixture of spiritual fruits. The taste was refreshing and most importantly, he could enjoy being a little tipsy.

"Sir!"

As the door opened, A Xiuda walked in humbly. He presented a few documents to him. "This is the relevant information regarding Three World Mountain..."

"Mm. All of you, take your leave!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands. The concubines and musician bowed in respect as they took their leave.

"Three World Mountain!"

Fang Yuan knew what his priorities were.

As his eyes glittered, he looked through the information.

"Three World Mountain! This is the area connecting this place to Da Qian Empire. It is divided into three portions, and two of it are the Da Qian World and Man Huang World. The other portion is the Illusionary World!"

"Rumour has it that... the Illusionary World is a land actualised by a highly skilled dream master on his deathbed... but the catch is... that place is not a spiritual land, but a perilous land!"

When highly skilled dream masters die, they would be able to

actualise their dream world to pass it on to their descendants.

Take for instance, Master Heartless, who had left behind Green Peak spiritual land and an inheritance for Fang Yuan.

However, there were exceptions. For those that would be seeking revenge, they would surely not leave behind a spiritual land, but a perilous land that would kill any life!

That dream master was not only highly skilled but was also affected by an unknown factor before his death. This resulted in the perilous land which was actualised to evolve and combine with the two other worlds. Therefore, it was left in an unusual state of coexistence with the other worlds, illusionary and fleeting.

If someone were to travel from Da Qian World to Man Huang World, they might have a slight chance of entering the perilous land, but the risks were not high.

But if someone were to go in the opposite direction, they would surely encounter the perilous land. Not only was it dangerous, but unpredictable too!

Normal Wu Zongs, spiritual knights or even dream masters might not make it out of there alive!

Soon, no one in Desert City ever had the thoughts of going back anymore.

"The land left there by a dream master would appear randomly and it would bring danger with it..."

Fang Yuan touched his chin and revealed a smile. "I must take a look for myself!"

...

At the same time, within Desert City, in a secret room.

"Young master, young mistress, the latest secret news!"

An escort with a strong spiritual aura passed through many layers of security checks and entered a room. He took out a letter.

"Secret letter? The seal of chicken feather and blood arrow? Is this from Da Qian?"

Both the young master and mistress had weird expressions.

"It must be a serious incident for our family to use this method of delivering the letter!"

The mistress appeared older and commanded, "Brother Yun, open it!"

There was a unique seal on the letter. Without opening it with the correct method, the letter would self-destruct.

"Alright!"

Qin Yun took out a small knife, cut his thumb, and dripped his blood over the seal of a chicken feather.

"Keke!"

At that moment, a red light flashed.

A proud looking cockerel appeared and cawed loudly before pecking the seal.

"Chi!"

The seal was broken.

Only a certain blood type could open the seal on the letter.

The young Qin Yun took the letter out, but it was a plain sheet of paper.

"It is indeed plain. Give it to me!"

As the young mistress saw the letter, she was excited. "It must be someone close to us who delivered this letter!"

Qin Yun laid the letter on the table. The young mistress took out an emerald ring from her finger and poured out a black powder. Mixing it with water, a black paste was formed and they applied it to the surface of the letter. Afterwards, they placed it in the furnace.

As the letter dried up, red words began to appear on the letter.

"This..."

As he scratched his head, there was a look of excitement on his face. "Qin Fengyu... is dead?"

This was the legitimate son and grandson of the Qin Family and was favoured by many. He was about to take over the establishments of the Qin Family.

The two of them were merely b*stards.

The Qin Family had a huge establishment and were also in control of a county. Naturally, there would be competition among the children to be the rightful heir to the family's inheritance.

Although both of them were b*stards, their bloods were extremely pure. Therefore, they were considered a sore eye to many and were therefore involved in the fight. For their survival, they had to escape the Qin Family and even out of Da Qian.

But now, it was a moment of joy for them.

The family had suffered an attack and the main family was killed. Not just Qin Fengyu, but the other legitimate children all died or were handicapped. Instead, the two of them were the most appropriate of all the children to be heirs now.

Therefore, their family had sent them this letter to recall them back.

"Sister... Are we going back?"

Qin Yun was excited and anxious.

"We must!"

The young mistress clenched her teeth. "Have you forgotten what Mother has instructed us with at her deathbed?"

"Of course I didn't forget, but Aunt is there..."

Qing Yun stumbled on his words.

"Why are you calling that evil woman Aunt?"

The young mistress frowned.

"I'm too used to it..."

Qin Yun shrugged his shoulders. This aunt was the legitimate first wife of their father and had the greatest power. It was her who chased both of them out of Da Qian Empire.

If they were to return, the greatest threat would still be from this woman!

"No! Not just her! We have to go past the Three World Mountain as well!"

The young mistress clenched her teeth and called for a person. "Uncle Zhou, do you have any method to go through the Three World Mountain safely?"

Uncle Zhou had a tall build and a cold look. He had big bones and his skin was extremely tanned. "Young mistress, young master... It is easy to come out of the Three World Mountain, but hard to enter. If you are travelling from Da Qian to where we are now, it would be quite safe. But if you are going against the flow and entering Da Qian, you will be met with the perilous land! I am only a 12th Gate martial artist and cannot protect you there! We need to seek help!"

"I know!"

The young mistress clenched her teeth. "For revenge, we will pay any price!"

Chapter 214: Chapter 214 The Dead Knight

"We are Qin Qing and Qin Yun. May we come in?"

In the White Camel Business Council headquarters, Fang Yuan looked at the message in his hands. "Who are these people?"

"They have escaped Da Qian recently and are from the Qin Family..."

A Xiuda held his scimitar and added. "They have protection from their loyal servants. Their leader, 'Elder Zhou', is at the peak of the 12th Gate, and is skilled in a secret technique. He once held his front and defended 10 strikes from a Wu Zong before admitting defeat!"

There were still differences among the martial artists who were below the Elemental Gathering Stage. This Elder Zhou must be the top among them.

Of course, his power was small like an ant to Fang Yuan!

"However... since I have nothing up, why not? Let them in!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands. Not long after, A Xiuda led three people in.

The first was a young mistress. She seemed to be in her twenties and her skin was white and smooth. Her legs were long, and she appeared very lively.

This was especially so for her petit lips. She gave off a vibe of determination and it was obvious that she was the leader among the three.

This was the lady from Qin Family, Qin Qing.

As for Qin Yun, who was standing at one side, he was pleasant looking at had obtained inner force in his martial arts cultivation. He was therefore not completely useless, but appeared a little weaker and therefore did not stand out as much.

'With such an outspoken sister, even a genius would seem weak and would ultimately appear like the average person...'

Seeing the three of them, Fang Yuan thought to himself. 'Eaglets cannot hide behind their mums forever. They must face tribulations before they can grow!'

Of course, this was none of his business, and therefore he did not comment. He turned his attention to Elder Zhou and was a little more interested.

Without taking into account his martial arts cultivation, Fang Yuan felt a sense of familiarity as he sensed the spiritual aura of his secret technique. As he tried to recall, he realised that he had known it from Yang Fan's dream world, among the collection of secret techniques.

"Mountain Fog?"

He softly commented these two words.

"What?"

As Elder Zhou heard this name, he was stunned!

The name of the secret technique he had cultivated was called Mountain Fog. It could increase his defensive capabilities and could be as immovable as the mountains. This was how he could withstand the 10 strikes from the Wu Zong.

The Wu Zong in front of him gave him not only a sense of danger but could also see through the foundations of his secret technique. This was shocking!

"Sir, you're spot on!"

Elder Zhou forced out a laugh.

In front of a Wu Zong who knew about secret techniques, he did not have the confidence that he could last if they were to fight.

"Alright, let's not be distracted. You're Qin Qing, right? Why are both of you looking for me?"

Fang Yuan waved his sleeves and asked directly.

"I've heard that you, Sir, are gathering information regarding the Three World Mountain. We are here to present to you more information!"

Qin Qing laughed, and Qing Yun knelt down. With two hands, he passed a secret script over.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan looked through the script and was drawn into it.

He already had quite a lot of information regarding Three World Mountain.

However, the details in this script were much more than the ones the White Camel Business Council had provided.

'How could they even calculate the timing and probability of the appearance of the Illusionary World... How many people are being sacrificed for them to do such an in-depth research?'

Looking at the young siblings, he shook his head. 'It's not them! It should have been their fate for them to inherit this from their ancestors. Or could it be the discovery of the Qin Family?'

"This is indeed good!"

The entire room was silent, and only the flipping sound of Fang Yuan reading the script could be heard.

Qin Qing was extremely anxious. Although she appeared calm and composed, her heart was already pounding. She finally felt relieved after hearing Fang Yuan's comment.

"I shall keep this. What do you guys want in return? Riches? Spiritual pills? Or martial arts manuals?"

Fang Yuan casually asked.

"None of these!"

Qin Qing clenched her teeth. "I've heard that you are intending to

cross the Three World Mountain against its natural flow. May we request you to bring along both of us? We are both trained in martial arts and will not be a burden to you!"

"Impossible!"

Although he confirmed his prediction, Fang Yuan outrightly rejected them.

What a joke!

The dangers of the Three World Mountain already struck fear in his heart, so why should he bring along two burdens with him? Was he hoping to die faster?

Qin Yun shuddered and turned pale; he was utterly disappointed.

"I cannot guess the methods that you might be using to cross the Three World Mountains, but you must be cautious..."

Qin Qing did not give up and continued. "You will surely have more resources than us, and more highly skilled as well. You might be more prepared than us, but you are lacking in something!"

"Oh? What is it?"

"A sacrificial warrior!"

Qin Qing replied without hesitation. "Do you know how dangerous the Three World Mountain is? You are still lacking people who would test out the road ahead for you. These people must be volunteers and have a certain level of self-defence!"

As she spoke, A Xiuda's expression changed.

She was right!

In the Three World Mountain, dangers were everywhere. If he were to risk himself for every danger, he would not be able to walk out alive even if he had nine lives.

All he needed was someone who would test the dangers for him.

However, what use would it be if these people were unwilling,

have thoughts about running away, or even have thoughts about tricking him?

If he were to use a lot of money to buy himself explorers to test the dangers, they might not be skilled enough, and it was hard to find people who were willing and able to do so.

He could only use sacrificial knights! Loyal sacrificial knights!

However, these sacrificial knights were not trained. How could they help?

Qin Qing was extremely confident as she looked at Fang Yuan. "Sir, you just have to let us tag along. As a reward, I can provide a group of 18 sacrificial knights. The weakest of them will have the cultivation level of at least an inner force martial artist. I think this would be enough for us to sacrifice in Three World Mountain!"

"You make sense..."

Fang Yuan smiled. This woman was extremely thoughtful, but she had missed out something.

How could she comprehend his godlike abilities?

With his dream-accessing techniques and his alchemy skills, if he was willing to stay in Desert City for a period of time, he could train out a large group of sacrificial knights.

Of course, this method would expend a lot of time and effort and would be rather inhumane to force the people to become his slaves.

If he allowed the Qin Family to help him on his, he did not have to do the dirty work and that could save him a lot of trouble.

He glared at Qin Qing. "How can you assure the quality and loyalty of your sacrificial knights?"

"Although we have lost the fight to be the heir within the Qin Family previously, we didn't gain nothing. On the contrary, all of these people were once a threat to the legitimate sons. Otherwise, why would they be chased out of Da Qian Empire?"

As she mentioned her family feud, there was a sense of hatred in her eyes. "The 18 Black Feathers Cavalry came from our family. They had once recited a blood oath to remain loyal to the two of us. They would even hesitate if they were to have any suicidal thoughts!"

"Is this the same for this martial artist by your side?"

Fang Yuan casually asked.

"Naturally..."

Qin Qing's face turned a little pale. "Not just that, Elder Zhou is also the leader of the 18 Black Feathers Cavalry! All of them have their secret techniques which are unique in their own ways, and if combined, they might even be able to take down three Wu Zongs!"

'What an emphasis on their skills. Is she afraid of me testing them out?'

Fang Yuan looked at Qin Qing and revealed a mysterious smile. 'This lady is too immature, but this is due to her age... However, if she can really sacrifice her subordinates without blinking an eye, then I must be wary of her...'

Although he was considering her trustworthiness, he quickly ordered, "Alright, ask them to take their own lives!"

"What?"

This was the worst outcome she had predicted. Qin Qing face became even paler, and Qin Yun, who was beside her, almost jumped in fear.

"If you cannot convince these sacrificial knights, it means that you cannot prove their worthiness. Therefore, why should I bring you two burdens along?"

Fang Yuan commented without blinking an eye.

"Miss!?"

Elder Zhou had a look of determination as he looked at Qin Qing.

"You... You..."

Qin Qing clenched her teeth. She looked away and controlled her tears. "Take your own life!"

"Yes Miss!"

Elder Zhou agreed as he plucked out his scimitar.

"Chi!"

The room flashed from the reflection of the scimitar.

"Splurt!"

Blood spurted onto the ground, dyeing it red.

"Uncle Zhou..."

Qin Yun was left dumbfounded and tears welled up in his eyes.

"What are you crying for?"

Fang Yuan waved his hand impatiently. "He is not dead yet!"

"Mm?"

Qin Qing was stunned. She could see a knife scar on his neck, and the scimitar almost took his life. However, in that instant, a hand grabbed and held on to the scimitar, stopping it from going in further.

His life was on the line!

'My ability to harness a precise amount of force is already at such a stage, this is good! Good!'

Fang Yuan looked at him and nodded his head in satisfaction.

Others would have thought that he had godlike powers before he cracked this joke.

However, in reality, only he himself knew that whatever happened just now was just his own experiment.

After all, if his ability was still lacking, he wouldn't be the one dying!

If Qin Qing were to hear Fang Yuan's inner thoughts, she would surely break out in cold sweat and shiver in fear.

"Whoosh!"

With the flick of his finger, the knife was flicked away. He quickly took out a few golden needles and started acupuncture on Elder Zhou to stop the blood flow. His actions were extremely smooth as though he was well-versed with what to do.

"Alright, he has only sustained an external injury. I've given him spiritual medicine. After a night's rest, he would recover, and it will not delay our journey to the Three World Mountain..."

After settling his wound, Fang Yuan stood up and dusted his hands. "It would be a pity if such a skilled man like him were to die here..."

"Sir, what do you mean?"

Qin Qing was extremely excited and confirmed with Fang Yuan on his intentions.

"That's right, the bunch of you are useful in the upcoming expedition to Three World Mountain!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. "However, you must agree to listen to my commands and never to disobey me before I shall agree to bring you two along!"

"Thank you, Sir!"

Qin Qing was ecstatic. Hurriedly, she pulled Qin Yun and bowed towards Fang Yuan.

'This pair of siblings are willing to risk so much to go to Da Qian. It seems that they might have a great calling, and I might have a use for them!'

Looking at them, Fang Yuan thought to himself silently.

Chapter 215: Chapter 215 Spiritual Monkey

From the outside, the Three World Mountain did not seem that tall. However, it was continuous and the end of the mountain was not in sight. Surrounding the mountains were layers of fog, and the scene was therapeutic.

No one could imagine that this was the mountain that was divided into three, separating Da Qian, Man Huang and the perilous Illusionary World.

"Phew... I'm finally out..."

At a path leading from the mountain, a young man crawled out, with his nose bleeding. Looking at the plains and desert in sight, his face was filled with excitement. Quickly, his expression turned into one of determination and hatred. "The Murong Family, just you wait. I will take revenge for what you did today!"

He had sworn that he would recuperate here before returning to Da Qian to take revenge on the family that had left him in such a state.

"Tata! Tata!"

Not far from here, there were galloping sounds heard.

A black line appeared and it began to draw nearer. On closer look, they were 21 cavalries.

"Sir, it seems that that is someone who has just escaped from Da Qian Empire!"

A middle-aged man examined him before shaking his head. "He is only a 12th Gate martial artist with severe injuries. He has no value to us!"

"Mm?"

Another young man rode his horse forward as the 2 cavalries on both sides made way for him. It was obvious that he had the higher

status among all of them.

"Tell me... Did you see the Illusionary World white you were on the Three World Mountain?"

The young man asked directly and his voice was filled with energy as it vibrated the air around.

"No!"

The martial artist was in a daze and mumbled a reply.

"Indeed..."

Fang Yuan sighed and released the martial artist. "If they came from Da Qian, they would have a lower chance of encountering the Illusionary World at around 10 percent! But if we go against the natural flow, we would surely encounter it! This useless person... He was left in such a state by the mere dangers of the mountain. If he had really encountered the Illusionary World, I'm afraid he wouldn't even know where his body would be rotting at... Let's go!"

As he finished his sentence, he gave up and turned around.

"Yes, Sir!"

The other 20 cavalries obeyed, and there seemed to be a female voice among them.

"Ughh!"

The martial artist rolled on the floor as he felt the spiritual aura around him. Quickly, he swallowed a mouthful of saliva. "Isn't the Man Huang rumoured to have lack of martial artists and resources, and that even martial artists of the 4 Heavenly Gates would enjoy riches and power? Why is it like that?"

At that moment, the martial artists' heart fell as he started to accept the fact that the world was an evil place...

...

"Based on the collective maps and the information, we need to find the shortest route once we enter the mountains..."

Fang Yuan was leading Qin Qing, her brother and the 18 Black Feathers Cavalry and stopped on a mountainous track.

The shape of the mountain was extremely weird. There were two peaks, and the peak at the eastern side was higher, while the peak at the western side was lower. The peaks were sticking out and the entire mountain resembled a two-headed snake.

"Although it is rather dangerous that we need to cut through the habitat of the spiritual monkeys to take the shortest route, the longer we stay in the Three World Mountain, the higher the chance of encountering the Illusionary World..."

Qin Qing mumbled and was agreeable to Fang Yuan's decision.

She was not aware of the fact that Fang Yuan was not only a Wu Zong, but also a dream master, and that he was rather interested in the Illusionary World.

With her current cultivation level, all she was hoping for was to minimise the troubles they would face on their journey.

'Of course... This is the best possible outcome. If we do encounter the Illusionary World, we'll just have to react accordingly...'

Fang Yuan's eyes were glittering, as though he could see through the fog and the secret within the Three World Mountain.

"Everyone, get into formation!"

Elder Zhou covered his mouth with a cloth which made his voice hoarse. However, with a command, the other 17 riders immediately obeyed and dismounted and spread the warning.

Fang Yuan was rather impressed with the 18 Black Feathers Cavalry.

If not for them, he would not have brought along the two burdens as well.

"Let's be clear. Although I've agreed to allow you two to follow me, I will only protect you two to a certain extent. If we encounter any real danger, every man will be for himself!"

Fang Yuan stared at Qin Qing in the eye. "If any of you would like to back out, it's not too late!"

"Don't worry, Sir!"

Qin Qing licked her lips as her face was filled with determination. "If that really happens, it would mean that we are not fated to make it through!"

She was wearing an inner armour and there were spiritual inscriptions all around Qin Yun and herself. They were covered in all sorts of protection.

Hearing this, Fang Yuan did not comment. With the wave of his hand, he continued. "Since that is so, let's be on our way!"

...

As the sunlight peered through the leaves of the trees and the fog, there were dim spotted shadows on the ground.

As the 18 Black Feathers Cavalry spread out, the three of them were surrounded in the middle. With much caution, they made their way into the mountain.

The forest was tranquil, peaceful, and the flowers were beautiful. It was as though there was no danger at all.

At this point in time, Qin Yun appeared excited. Seeing a huge flower, he unwittingly walked up and stepped on a dried branch, making a kacha sound!

"Hiss! Hiss!"

At the moment where the cavalries were less alert, the 'dried branch' suddenly moved and revealed sharp fangs. It bit towards Qin Yun's foot!

"Ah..."

As everything happened, Qin Yun's mind was blank and he could not move a single bit.

He could only detect a golden flash from the corner of his eye!

"Whoosh!"

A golden needle appeared and at the speed of light, it struck at the head of the dried branch and disappeared into the ground.

"Hiss... Hiss..."

The dried branch started to curl up and wailed in pain.

Elder Zhou quickly rushed towards Qin Yun and sliced the dried branch into many pieces, and green blood started to flow out.

"Dried Skin Snake?"

Elder Zhou bent down and revealed a horrible look. "This snake is best at absorbing one's energy. With its appearance similar to a dried branch, its camouflage is perfect! Even I was tricked!"

Qin Qing's face turned pale as she quickly went up to comfort Qin Yun.

The Dried Skin Snake was an extremely cunning animal. It would camouflage as a tree branch to attract its prey. Its venom was extremely lethal and if not for Fang Yuan's help, even with the spiritual inscriptions protection him, Qin Yun might still not be able to survive the Dried Skin Snake's venom, and the outcome would be terrible.

"Thank you, Sir, for your help!"

As she stood up, she brought Qin Yun along to thank Fang Yuan.

Even if they were not here for the Illusionary World, they had still benefited much from journeying with Fang Yuan.

"It's nothing. If we meet a real danger, it's best for you to not depend on me!"

Fang Yuan spoke the truth, and the Qin siblings rolled their eyes

in their minds.

This was especially so for Qin Yun, whose face was flushed.

He had a little gratitude for Fang Yuan previously, but now it was all gone.

After the commotion, they continued to make their way.

Half a day had passed and the vegetation became increasingly denser. The skies were covered in dark clouds, covering the entire sun.

"We must be careful. The habitat of the spiritual monkeys is just in front!"

Elder Zhou tightened his grip on his scimitar and spoke in a serious tone.

Fang Yuan recalled the information regarding the spiritual monkeys.

Within the Three World Mountain, there was a weird species of spiritual monkeys. Their arms were long to the extent they would reach for their knees, and their bones were extremely hardy. Knives and swords would not be able to hurt them, and they were immune to the elements as well. When matured, they would be comparable to an inner force martial artist! If they were slightly stronger, they would have the cultivation of a 4 Heavenly Gates martial artist! The leader of their pack would be at the Elemental Gathering Realm!

This was not the worst part.

The worst would be the intellectual monkeys with spiritual eyes.

These monkeys would have the same level of intellect as humans and could execute a special ability from their Mind Palaces. It would be wise for even a Wu Zong to avoid them as well.

This time, Fang Yuan and company were intending to cut through the biggest habitat of these spiritual monkeys.

There were stories of lucky Wu Zongs who were able to see for themselves the gathering of more than a hundred spiritual monkeys. There must be a monkey king at the Elemental Gathering Realm among them, and a probability that there might be spiritual monkeys who have evolved special traits!

At that point of time, that particular Wu Zong was scared to the point that he ran away. He only recorded the details of the encounter in his diary after he had escaped.

However, Fang Yuan and company were intending to make their way through with brute force, and the difficulty level was unimaginable.

"Let's take a rest first. Afterwards, while we are refreshed, we can try to rush through during the night!"

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes.

Although the forest was slightly illuminated, his senses told him that it was almost nightfall in the outside world.

No matter how scary the spiritual monkeys might be, they were still animals after all and would have a regular activity pattern. If they could deduce that pattern, they would save a lot of trouble.

"Yes, Sir!"

As he commanded, Elder Zhou and the rest could only obey.

The group of them found a large empty spot, pitched their tents and started to eat their dried rations.

One of the Black Feathers Cavalry's nose twitched and revealed a look of excitement. "There's a source of water East of here! I'll take some water back!"

"Every one of them in the 18 Black Feathers Cavalry has a unique ability. Number 13th has a keen sense of smell and hearing, and can detect water sources from miles away..."

Elder Zhou explained proudly.

After an hour, Number 13 was not back yet, and Elder Zhou's expression changed.

"It seems that he might have encountered trouble. Let's go and look for him!"

Fang Yuan, who was sitting with his legs crossed, commented.

As the other 17 of them started to search, they only took a short while before located Number 13 next to a lake.

He was frozen in a posture of retrieving water, but the bottle in his hands was on the ground. His body was frozen like an ice statue!

"What a mysterious chilly lake!"

Looking at the emerald spring water, he mumbled to himself.

"This seems like..."

With the glitter in his eyes, he released his elemental energy, forming a huge hand which hauled the lake water up.

"Rumble!"

From the extreme force, the calm lake started to gush and a geyser appeared.

Looking at this, Qin Yun was stunned.

Although he knew that Wu Zong was powerful, it was a rare sight to see the scary scene of a Wu Zong exerting all its strength.

"Come out!"

As the water on both sides made way, Fang Yuan's struck his claw out. The huge hand formed out of elemental force hauled a sky blue pearl out and brought it to the ground.

This pearl was glowing inside and appeared normal. Weird enough, it was not cold, and on the contrary, it felt a little warm to the touch and was extremely mysterious.

Chapter 216: Chapter 216 Monkey King

"Freezing Pearl!? Indeed the same as how it was recorded!"

Fang Yuan was filled with excitement but became serious. "But we'll still have to test its effects!"

Casually, he pointed at one of the cavalries. "You, go! Pick up the pearl!"

"Follow instructions!"

Number 17th's expression changed. As Qin Qing took in a deep breath, she commanded him.

"Yes, Sir!"

As he clenched his teeth, he wore a leather glove. He then walked up calmly and picked up the Freezing Pearl, and nothing happened.

"Mm. Take out your gloves and try again!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and commanded him once more.

"Ah!"

Number 17th obeyed. As his finger touched the pearl, he screamed.

"Whoosh!"

A blue flash of light exploded from the pearl, covering him.

As the glow dimmed, there was only an icy statue left in his place. Number 17th, who was frozen in the ice, had stopped breathing!

"To freeze on touch. It can freeze anything as long as it's not elemental force, flowing water or anything similar. It is indeed a freezing pearl!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. With the wave of his hands, the blue pearl landed in a jade box, which was subsequently taken in by the Mountain River Pearl.

Qin Qing and Qin Yun, both who witnessed this scene, remained silent.

"Indeed... I need these sacrificial knights!"

Fang Yuan heaved a sigh inside.

If he had prepared a bunch of sacrificial knights for his previous journeys, he wouldn't have encountered so many dangers himself!

"Mistress, master, let's go!"

Elder Zhou sighed. "Number 13 and 17 are both dead. Let's not make their death for nothing. As long as we remember them and pay respects to them once we are back in our family, and not forgetting to compensate their descendants..."

"That's right!"

Qin Qing licked her lips and stood up with determination. "We not only have to pay our respects to them, we must also bring them into the Qin Family's ancestry! As long as our Qin Family exist, we must let them live on!"

With that, she pulled Qin Yun over.

"Sister... I know..."

Qin Yun's eyes were red.

He knew that if he were to fail in being the heir of the family, then these two sacrificial knights would have died for nothing.

"Let's go!"

He gritted his teeth and followed on.

"Very good!"

Fang Yuan walked on. As he felt the Qin siblings catching up, he nodded his head.

He felt that after the death of the two sacrificial knights, both Qin Yun and Qin Qing had the magnanimity of a heir. They had matured extremely quick in such a harsh environment.

"Phew..."

Fang Yuan sighed. "Let's take this opportunity and cover as much ground as we can!"

Everyone remained silent as they started to rush.

"It's around midnight now, and the group of spiritual monkeys should be sleeping and not wandering outside..."

It was pitch black everywhere and in the fog, the visibility was at its worst.

It was a good thing that everyone was a martial artist with a considerable cultivation level. Everyone had a keen sense of sight and hearing and could rely on the dim moonlight to continue their journey.

The mountainous road was rugged. Coupled with the fact that they were making their way in the dark, Qin Yun had fallen down a couple of times and his hands were bloodied.

Elder though looked around and whispered. "Only if we're extremely unlucky, would we encounter the mysterious species here..."

"Wuuu! Wuuuu!"

As he spoke, a voice full of energy was heard.

"Is that the sound of the monkeys?!"

Qin Yun exclaimed.

In the dark, a pair of eyes glowed and stared at Qin Yun.

"Flick!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and casually flicked his fingers.

"Whoosh!"

He shot out a concentrated beam of elemental force. Like an arrow, it flew in the air and glowed.

Qin Yun's pupils contracted. With the illumination from the streak of elemental force, he could see the appearance of the spiritual monkey.

It was extremely big in size and was taller than himself. The muscles on its arms were bulging and it was even thicker than his own legs. As its hands stretched past its knees, its face was fiery red, and there was a mysterious glow coming from its mind palace.

The unique thing was that this spiritual monkey appeared to be extremely old, and the fur on it was turning white. There was a sense of spirituality in its eyes, giving off the vibe that it was a cunning monkey!

Without a doubt, the spirituality of this monkey was shocking. If it was given more time, it might develop its spiritual eye and awaken itself!

However, all of its hopes and dreams would end here!

"Chi!"

The streak of elemental force struck through its mind palace, breaking a bloodied hole in the process. Its brain fluid exploded out and the entire scene was a mess.

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan sighed. "After killing this old monkey, the rest will soon come along. We need to move quickly!"

"Quickly!"

Qin Qing's expression changed. Without hesitation, they were on their way again.

Without consideration for any ambush that might be present, everyone used their lightness skill. Their speed of advanced increased and after a short while, they had already passed a mountain stream. The silhouettes on both sides were retreating quickly as they advanced.

"Wuuu! Wuuu!"

At that point in time, there were many sounds from the monkeys in the surroundings. It was continuous and spread far and wide, striking fear in those who heard it.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Many pairs of eyes appeared and surrounded them like candles.

"This is... Monkey... monkey tribe!"

Qin Qing lost her voice.

"It seems that we are too late. We're surrounded!"

Fang Yuan shook his head. "There's no use in us hiding. They have the geographical advantage, and the fact that everywhere is pitch black makes it even harder for us! Get me the Bright Moon Pearl!"

"Weng! Weng!"

A bright glow filled the darkness and the surrounding paths, vines, trees... Everything was illuminated.

Qin Yun took in a cold breath as he looked at the tribe of monkeys.

The monkey tribe was full of ferocious monkeys. With more than a hundred of them, they surrounded Fang Yuan and company. Staring fiercely at them, it was as though they wanted to eat them up alive.

At the same time, more monkeys were arriving.

"Wuu... Wuuuu..."

There was a sharp sound heard. Loud and full of elemental energy, the sound almost led to Qin Yun spitting out a mouthful of blood.

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed. With a huge hand formed from elemental

force, he bashed his way forward.

A few spiritual monkeys were swiped away and broke a few bones as they wailed in pain.

There was now a hole broken apart among the surrounding monkeys and a group of people rushed out.

"We can't withstand this for long!"

Fang Yuan led the way. Looking at the spiritual monkeys who were giving chase, he commanded. "Three of you, carry the light source and distract the monkeys away!"

"Yes, Sir!"

Three sacrificial knights appeared solemn. Holding on to the Bright Moon Pearl, they turned towards a separate direction.

"Wuu! Wuuuuu!"

"Wuu! Wuuuuu!"

The monkeys shrieked. Fang Yuan and company took cover and hid within a small gorge. As they felt the monkey tribe rushing by them, the Qin siblings' hearts were pounding.

They were clear that the sacrificial knights who were picked out as bait were as good as dead. The only thing they could do was to prolong the time before their death.

Even for them, if they were discovered, they would also have to face death.

"Most of the monkeys have given chase to the three of them. Next up, we have to... bash our way through this gorge!"

Elder Zhou gritted his teeth and led the way.

Fang Yuan had a look of empathy in his eyes but did not say much as he followed silently behind.

"Sister..."

Qin Yun took a few steps forward and twitched his nose in

curiosity. "What is this... why is this so fragrant?"

"This is... wine!"

Elder Zhou was sure of that. How could he not know the smell of such fragrant wine?

"Why would there be the fragrance of wine deep in the forest?"

Qin Qing's face was flushed, as though she was a little tipsy.

"Keke!"

Elder Zhou was stunned as though he had thought of something. His teeth started to chatter in fear. "This wine had the fragrance of berries and is fermented from a hundred different fruits. It is the Monkey's Wine!"

"Monkey's Wine, fermented by monkeys. How interesting..."

Qin Yun continued, as his expression changed. "Why would the fragrance... be here?"

"This is because... we are in the monkey's nest!"

Fang Yuan replied without batting an eyelid.

"Monkey's nest?"

Qin Yun rounded a corner and arrived at a flat land. On the side of the cliff were golden-coloured vines, and many female monkeys were hanging by the vines and carrying their babies. Some of them were in deep sleep, while others were awakened by the commotion and looked around nervously.

In the middle of the place was a rock cavern and the fragrance of the wine seemed to have originated from there.

"It's... it's really the monkey's nest!"

Qin Qing turned pale. If not for the fact that Fang Yuan was with them, she would have thought that Fang Yuan had intentionally led them here.

"The most dangerous place is always the safest place. Don't you

think this place is a good place to stay?"

Fang Yuan smiled. "All the strong monkeys have left to chase them, and left this place defenceless. The monkeys would never think that we would ambush their nest!"

"Furthermore... if we don't come here, how can we defeat the monkey king?"

"Monkey king?"

Qin Yun almost fainted.

"Of course, the monkey king!"

Fang Yuan continued with a serious tone. "I am obviously no match for all of the spiritual monkeys. But if we take down their leader, it would strike enough fear in them for us to leave this place safely!"

"Sir... You are looking to fight with the monkey king?"

Elder Zhou shuddered as he recalled the practices of the monkeys.

Wild animals would respect the strong. If anyone could defeat the monkey king one on one, they would gain the respect of the spiritual monkeys, and could safely leave the mountain.

"How did you guess that the monkey king would be here?"

"If the monkey king is here, we shall defeat it. If it is not here, we shall rest here and take their wine with us. Any problems with that?"

Fang Yuan turned around with a surprised look.

"I see!"

Elder Zhou gritted his teeth. "This is indeed a possible plan. However... Don't worry Sir, we will guard the outside and will not let any spiritual monkeys interfere with your fight against the monkey king!"

"Very good!"

Fang Yuan shifted his attention to the rock cavern in the middle.

From there, he could already feel a strong spiritual aura from a spiritual soul's presence.

"Monkey king?"

He laughed heartily with no intention of hiding. The energy level in him surged to peak levels.

"Wuuu Wuuuuuuu...."

Many baby monkeys started to scream and hugged their mothers as they retreated, and some of them even fainted.

"Wuu! Wuuu!"

From the rock cavern, a tall monkey's silhouette appeared.

It was a few feet tall and was covered in golden fur. As it stood up, the eye on its mind palace opened, revealing a mysterious glow. There was a silvery flash from its eyes, and as soon as it saw Fang Yuan, it rushed out.

This was the spiritual monkey king, which had evolved a special trait!

Reacting to Fang Yuan's challenge, it exclaimed furiously and in the process, the surroundings shook.

Chapter 217: Chapter 217 Black Shadow

"Wuuu! Wuuuuu!"

The Golden-furred monkey king exclaimed. Its gigantic body started to make a run towards Fang Yuan.

The Qin siblings turned pale!

Facing this ferocious animal, they froze in their tracks! They could not even dodge and was awaiting their deaths.

Not just them, even Elder Zhou and the few Black Feather Cavalries were biting their lips till they bled.

There was no question!

If the Qin siblings were to face this monkey king alone, there was no doubt that they would die, and there was not even a slight chance of survival for them.

"Good!"

Fang Yuan looked at the monkey claw which was about to land and started to laugh. With his right fist, he flew upwards.

"Rumble!"

The ground shook!

If the previous scene was described as the sky falling down, then Fang Yuan would be the pillar breaking through the skies.

"Bang!"

As the claw and fist met, the ground in the vicinity cracked as though there was a mini earthquake.

The Golden-furred monkey king took two steps back and stared at the small ant in front of him curiously. The energy it had in it was immense.

"Chi Chi!"

"Wuuu! Wuuuu!"

The commotion attracted a lot of strong monkeys.

Seeing that a human was fighting with their king, they calmed down and formed a circle as they witnessed the fight without attempting to go forward to help.

"Phew..."

Elder Zhou and the rest retreated. "Everything seems good... It seems that the monkey king is indeed respectable. If Sir can defeat it, they would surely not dare to attack us!"

"Can Sir defeat the monkey king?"

Qin Yun looked at the surrounding spiritual monkeys and stumbled on his words.

"This..."

Elder Zhou sounded depressed. "This monkey king is at the Elemental Gathering Stage and had opened its spiritual eye. With its powers, normal Wu Zongs would not be its match... But looking at how daring Sir is, it seems that he has something to depend on!"

"Bang!"

As soon as he finished, they witnessed Fang Yuan slamming the spiritual monkey king into a rock wall, leaving a huge indentation in the wall as the rocks around it crumbled.

"What a monkey king! It seems like I have to show you my true powers!"

There was a mild golden glow emitting from Fang Yuan's skin. This was the extreme stage of the combination of the Hundred Poison Golden Body and the Giant Eagle Metal Body.

Not just that, there were three snake-like glows on his back. The three spiritual meridians disappeared into his body, taking up the shape of an armour.

"Rumble!"

Following the surge of energy, the air around was vibrating. The monkey tribe shuddered and took a few steps back.

"This is... Meridian Opening!"

Qin Qing exclaimed in delight. "Sir is a Meridian Opening Wu Zong!"

"No wonder he could think of traversing the Three World Mountain by himself."

Elder Zhou came to a realisation.

"Wuu! Wuuuuu!"

Following an exclamation, the spiritual monkey king climbed out from the dent in the wall. It was infuriated and the third eye from its mind palace started to glow, shooting a beam of light at Fang Yuan.

"Whoosh!"

A streak of golden light landed on Fang Yuan.

"This is..."

Fang Yuan felt an immense difficulty in raising his right hand, and his joints were cracking. In despair, he exclaimed. "Is this your godly powers? Gravitational Technique?"

His body felt extremely heavy and the pressure he was experiencing was similar to the Four Elements Spiritual Array.

The difference was the fact that the city master of Descending Star City had to painstakingly develop and perfect the array, but the Golden-furred monkey king could use it anytime it wanted to with the flick of its spiritual will!

"Wuu! Wuuuuuu!"

The Golden-furred monkey king roared and appeared enraged. It arrived in front of Fang Yuan and raised its claw.

"Heh, however... This binding strength is still not enough to put me down! Giant Eagle Claw!"

Without fear, he struck out his claw.

"Chi! Chi!"

The claws met in mid-air.

The illusionary giant eagle claw was explosive as it gave off a fearful screech in mid-air.

"Bang! Bang!"

The Golden-furred monkey king took a few steps back and had a look of confusion in its eyes.

Never would it have thought that someone who was trapped by its Gravitational Technique would be able to move without much restriction.

"Mm... It seems that this is all you've got!"

Fang Yuan swung his neck as though he was not being affected by the binding technique at all.

He could previously break through the array, so why would he put the Golden-furred monkey king's Gravitational Technique on his mind?

"I'm wondering if I can dig out your third eye to smelt it into a magical weapon!"

"Chi! Chi!"

In a moment, the Golden-furred monkey king's fur stood on its ends, as it shrieked.

"You can feel my spiritual aura... this is not right!"

Fang Yuan looked around and realised that several other spiritual monkeys were screaming as well. They started to escape and gave up watching the fight, as though they could feel an impending disaster.

"Wuu! Wuuuuu!"

The monkey king felt the same as well. Without caring about the fight or his wine, he climbed up the cliff and ran away.

"Sir... Did you scare the monkey tribe away?!"

Qin Yun stared in disbelief.

"Idi*t!"

Fang Yuan looked into the dark skies and appeared solemn. "The spiritual monkeys own this place. They have only escaped because they have sensed a familiar impending disaster..."

"Disaster?"

Qin Qing shook and made a guess. "Illusionary World?"

"I've heard that this world is illusionary and will only occasionally appear in Three World Mountain. Whoever who would encounter it would not likely be able to survive!"

Elder Zhou revealed a look of determination. "Compared to it, the danger from the monkey tribe is nothing... To think about it, we were even willing to run through the monkey's area to avoid the Illusionary World, but in the end, it had still arrived..."

The sky became darker.

As the monkey tribe ran for their lives, there was not a single life form left. The mountain breeze blew and with it was a rustling sound. Everywhere was extremely silent compared to the initial commotion, and it was an eerie silence.

"Keke! Keke!"

Qin Yun was chattering his teeth in fear as he looked at his sister. "What should we do?"

"Sir?!"

Qin Qing took two steps forward and looked at Fang Yuan. She knew that it all depended on him for all of them to escape alive.

"We'll not run!"

Fang Yuan shook his head as though he had just snapped out from a trance. There was a look of shock on his face. "We are now... Already in the Illusionary World..."

"What?"

The Qin siblings went pale. "How is this possible?"

"The Illusionary World does not belong to our world from the beginning. Like how two pieces of paper would stack together, it would only appear where two points meet, where the two other worlds coincide. This is the real Three World Mountain!"

Hearing the silence in the air, Fang Yuan shook his head.

"Then what will happen to us..."

Qin Qing was about to add on but was distracted by the sounds of a tribe of monkeys.

"Chi! Chi!"

In the darkness, many pairs of red eyes appeared as they approached them.

"This is... the spiritual monkeys from before! No... that's not right..."

Elder Zhou looked.

The spirituality in the monkey's eyes was now gone, and their eyes were bloodshot. Their movement was zombie-like and their fur was a pitch black. Like shadows, they stood up and approached them.

"One of you, go and test their ability!"

Fang Yuan ordered.

"Die!"

A Black Feather Cavalry rushed forward. He had the cultivation of an 8th Gate martial artist, and he struck his scimitar towards

the head of one of the spiritual monkeys.

"Chila!"

As the scimitar glittered, it went straight into the head of the black monkey.

An eerie scene soon unfolded.

There was no blood, no screaming.

The black monkey appeared normal, and the scimitar on its head started to disappear, as though the shadow of it was swallowing it in.

Not just that, the scimitar seemed to be able to attract and pull the Black Feather Cavalry towards it.

"No..."

The Black Feather Cavalry wanted to let go, but the black monkey stretched out its hands and held him tightly.

"Ah..."

He started to wail but was slowly taken in by the shadow of the black monkey. Soon, he was left with his upper body, then his shocked face, then his arm.

Finally, as the black monkey pressed him in, the Black Feather Cavalry disappeared and was swallowed completely.

Without changing its expression, its bloodshot eyes became even redder as it stared at Fang Yuan and the rest.

"How can such a normal spiritual monkey evolve such a powerful trait?"

Fang Yuan appeared serious. "Are all of you possessed? Let's go!"

Looking around, he had no intention of breaking out of the surrounding monkeys. He made a dash towards the monkey king's rock cavern.

"Follow!"

Elder Zhou pushed the Qin siblings along and ordered another two sacrificial knights to distract them. Together, they hid in the rock cavern.

The rock cavern was rather spacious, and it was extremely dry inside. It laid in the centre and was a favourable hiding spot.

With the strong fragrance of wine, everyone in the rock cavern became tipsy.

There were two exclamations behind followed by footsteps. It was evident that the black monkeys had caught up to them.

"If there are no other escape routes, we would die here!"

Fang Yuan took a quick look at a corner and his eyes glittered. "However, we are surrounded now. We can only defend this place with our lives!"

"In history, the Illusionary World would only appear for a while. We just have to last longer than it!"

"Furthermore... My goal is not to simply last for a period of time!"

...

As his eyes glittered, he could see a black monkey walking towards them.

"Giant Eagle Claw!"

"Rumble!"

The black monkey few backwards and there were three deep claw marks on its chest.

"It seems that attacking them with elemental force is rather effective! Although it took up some of my energy, it is still effective!"

As he struck the monkey, he quickly retreated.

A few black monkeys started to surround them once again.

"Down!"

As he aimed at a rock wall, he released his elemental energy, causing rocks to crumbled and seal the cavern.

"Whoosh!"

Long before he had sealed the cavern, he had released a streak of elemental energy. Like a sharp knife, it sliced the head of a black monkey. In mid-air, he grabbed the monkey's head and brought it into the cavern.

"This way..."

He had already used his spiritual will and realised that there were escape paths in the cavern. Before hiding in the cavern, he had already planned for the way ahead.

He started to do a headcount for all the people with him, now that they had retreated deep into the mountains.

He realised that after all that commotion, the only ones left were the Qin Siblings, Elder Zhou, and three other Black Feather Cavalries.

Chapter 218: Chapter 218 Spiritual Seed

"Wuu! Wuuuu!"

Within the cavern, the Eight Moon Pearl illuminated the entire place with a green glow. They all had a creepy look as the green glow landed on their faces.

This was especially so for the spiritual monkey's head in Fang Yuan's hands. Even though the head was already severed off, it still had the vitality in it. Shrieking loudly, it opened its fangs as though it wanted to cause trouble.

"What is this... weird creature..."

Both Qin Yun and Qin Qing gave a disgusted look.

"Indeed a weird creature!"

Fang Yuan walked up and examined the black mist that was spurting out from the spiritual monkey's severed head.

"Hiss... Hiss..."

The black mist was thick and started to slither up Fang Yuan's fingers like a hand full of life.

"Ha!"

As his eyes glittered, he exerted his elemental force.

"Chila!"

White smoke emerged. His elemental force was against the dark force and it had resulted in a stalemate.

"This is a strong dark force..."

After a while, Fang Yuan opened his eyes and let out a long sigh. "Although it's his evil in nature, its power is already comparable to elemental force..."

"Chichi!"

As he spoke, the monkey's head in his hands disappeared into a puddle of black blood. Most of the dark force disappeared together with it without leaving any traces of it behind.

"Does the dark force take cover in the Illusionary World?"

Fang Yuan could detect the power of the shadows. As he looked around, he felt depressed.

"This means that... Not just spiritual monkeys, but humans might be possessed by it too!"

The commotion outside slowly settled down.

Through a crack in the rock wall, a black mist slowly slithered its way in like a hand dancing.

"What is this... damned thing?!"

A Black Feathers Cavalry sliced his sword at it, but the sword went straight through it and into a rock, resulting in sparks.

Not just that, the black hand slithered its way up the sword and spread to his palm, arm and finally to his chest.

"Number Four!"

Elder Zhou exclaimed and rushed over as he used his finger to press on Number Four's acupuncture point, but to no avail.

To make things worse, the black hand continued its way on his fingers.

"Ghost!"

Elder Zhou's expression changed. As he swung his scimitar, two of his fingers dropped onto the floor.

"Boss?"

Two other Black Feathers Cavalry were in shock.

Only now did they realise that their fellow brother stood up. His face was shrouded in black mist and his eyes were bloodshot. As he let out a beastly roar, he pounced towards them with his hands

shaped into claws. Opening his mouth wide, he bit on their necks.

"Get lost!"

Fang Yuan looked at the helpless Qin Siblings and waved his right hand.

"Bang!"

As the dark-forced Number Four screamed, he was smashed into the rock wall.

"How does this dark force spread so quickly?"

Fang Yuan came to Number Four.

His limbs were broken and should not be able to move. However, he raised his neck and the ferocious look it gave made it seemed like he was no longer human.

"What a parasite..."

With focus, Fang Yuan grabbed his pulse and transferred his elemental force.

"Weng! Weng!"

There was a white glow that originated from the back of his hand as it slowly spread to his wrist, arms, chest and face.

"Chi!"

As the dark force was cleansed out of him, an unconscious and pale-looking middle-aged man was all that was left.

"He should be... fine now....."

Fang Yuan calmly commented before keeping silent once more.

'This dark force and elemental force counter each other. My guess is right... It is extremely afraid of dream elemental force. This must be left behind by an evil dream master, right?'

Elder Zhou witnessed the scene before him and looked at the two fingers on the floor with a helpless look.

He was extremely regretful.

If he knew that Fang Yuan was able to save Number Four, he wouldn't have needed to sacrifice his fingers!

His determination to save a life seemed like a foolish joke now.

"Godly doctor..."

Qin Qing could not stand it anymore and asked.

"I can chase the dark force away and heal fractured bones, but this..."

Fang Yuan shook his head. "If these two fingers were still on him, I can still transfer my elemental energy to chase the dark force away, but now... I am more curious about their thinking..."

"Why do you want to do that, even though I am beside you and you have seen for yourself what happened to the monkey's head?"

He glanced at Elder Zhou with a serious look.

"This..."

Elder Zhou appeared confused, before revealing a shocked look. "Young Mistress, Young Master, beware! This dark force seems to be able to affect your thinking!"

He was affected by the dark force, which explained his reckless and extreme actions.

"How? Are you still able to walk?"

Fang Yuan stood up and turned towards the widest tunnel.

"No... No problem!"

Elder Zhou clenched his teeth and used his clothing to cover up his wounds. Looking at his unconscious subordinate, he gritted his teeth. "If we meet any more dangers, I hope that Sir, you will be able to bring Young Mistress and Young Master to safety. The few of us can sacrifice anytime!"

"Mm, this was my plan all along!"

Fang Yuan replied without batting an eyelid.

Elder Zhou was speechless.

...

At this point in time, at the sealed wall by the crumbled rocks, the black mist started to spread in.

Fang Yuan followed the fragrance of the wine and the tracks left behind by the monkey king as he continued deeper into the cavern, finally locating the nest of the monkey.

"This is..."

Qin Qing was speechless when she witnessed what was before her.

In front of her was a huge underground cave like a square.

In the middle of the square, there were countless tree roots and stumps. In the middle of it all was a huge tree, and around it was many tree stumps.

This tree was the last of its kind.

In the huge tree, there was a huge hole. It was filled with a green-coloured wine. The fragrance of the fruit wine filled the entire square. It was intense and the smell of it was 10 times more than before! 100 times!

Qin Qing was already too tipsy to begin with. As she came to the square, she could not withstand it any longer. As her face became flushed, she became drunk and fell to the ground.

At the side, Qin Yun started to wail and mumbled to himself. "I want revenge!" "Sister... Mother! I feel terrible and drained..." Slowly, he went into a deep slumber.

"What in the world!"

Seeing what just happened, Fang Yuan was speechless.

Of course, the spiritual monkey's wine was not poisonous. In

fact, it had nutritious value and was able to supplement the body. However, they were not able to hold their liquor and this was therefore no different from drugs.

Unfortunately, the Qin siblings were both not accustomed to drinking and the protection they had all over their bodies were useless, which was why both of them succumbed.

"Look after the two of them..."

After casually instructed them, he used his lightness skill and leapt on the tree stumps.

"Monkey wine? Monkeys are well known to gather fruits to ferment, producing wine. Who knew how long the wine was here. There might even be spiritual fruits in it..."

Fang Yuan took out his Mountain River Pearl and prepared to take out a few empty gourds.

However, suddenly, his expression changed.

With the flip of his hands, a seed appeared.

The seed appeared black and unattractive, but it slowly released an emerald glow and a slight hint of a thought of its own, as though it was trying to convince its thirst to exist.

"It..."

Fang Yuan could recognise that this seed was a treasure he had found from Lu Renjia's secret stash. It was the seed of a spiritual plant which he suspected as a Heaven Grade.

The spiritual seed was extraordinary. Previously, just the spiritual aura of it was already enough to help Fang Yuan achieve a breakthrough in Botany.

Putting all hopes on it, Fang Yuan planted it in Green Peak Spiritual Mountain, but nothing happened since, which made him a little disappointed.

However, there were changes to the seed once again. It exerted

its own will to exist, but it was directed to the pool of monkey wine.

"Mm..."

Fang Yuan looked at the tree stump followed by the monkey wine and was confused. "Is this happening because of the spiritual tree or the spiritual wine? No, the spiritual wine had absorbed all the essence from the tree while it was fermented. I'm afraid it has already taken all the spiritual property from the spiritual tree..."

Thinking about it, he finally decided not to use his own means, but follow the wishes of the seed and submerged it into the wine.

Although the spiritual wine as good, Fang Yuan already had a comparable bottomless wine pot. Together with his huge collection of spiritual items, it was hard for him to convince himself to take this spiritual wine, of which the contents of the wine was still unknown to him.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

Once the spiritual seed was submerged into the pool, it started to glow as it released a huge bubble.

Following which, a swirl started to appear in the middle of the pool of wine. It slowly grew and became bigger, but the amount of wine started to decrease.

Finally, a dried wooden platform was revealed and in the middle of it was the spiritual seed.

At this point in time, the black skin was shed, revealing an emerald green colour. The signs of life within the seed started to grow.

"I've seen many people drinking wine... But it's my first time seeing a spiritual seed drinking wine!"

Fang Yuan smirked. Slowly, he felt the last hint of spiritual property in the tree stump he was standing on being sucked away,

and it started to dry up.

"Weng! Weng!"

With the wave of his hands, the spiritual seed landed on his palm.

"Indeed... It's different!"

If the seed's previous appearance was described as an uncut rock, the spiritual seed would be considered a beautiful gem.

"If I can locate a spiritual land, this spiritual seed should be able to germinate now, right?"

With a flash, the spiritual seed was once again absorbed into the Mountain River Pearl.

The wine fragrance which initially filled the entire place was slowly dissipating, and the Qin siblings slowly came to after being made to drink water.

"All it takes for it to shed its skin was an entire pool of spiritual wine and the spiritual property of this spiritual tree?"

Fang Yuan leapt down from the stump, speechless. "Is this a good thing or a bad thing..."

"This is..."

Elder Zhou looked at the roots left behind by the old tree and was shocked.

"This was the nest of the spiritual monkey king and this was his treasure!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his nose. "Of course, let's hope that it will not be enraged after coming back here!"

"Bang!"

In the next moment, following a loud sound, there were footsteps approaching.

Elder Zhou forcefully turned his neck over and saw a huge

silhouette rushing into the cave.

The monkey king appeared very different from what it used to be.

All of its golden fur had become black and its eyes were bloodshot. Seeing the empty tree stump, its ferocious look turned into one of confusion as it let out a blood-curdling cry.

"It's the spiritual monkey king! It is being possessed!"

Elder Zhou and the rest appeared desolate.

Chapter 219: Chapter 219 Breakthrough

"Who would've thought that the spiritual monkey king would also succumb to the dark force..."

Sensing the increasingly scary spiritual aura of the spiritual monkey king, Fang Yuan shook his head and gave a serious look.

He had confidence that he could defeat the previous spiritual monkey king, but now, the current spiritual monkey king gave him a feeling of danger.

"Elder Zhou..."

He was back facing Elder Zhou and was signalling for them to find their way out.

"Sir... take care!"

Elder Zou protected the Qin siblings and ran towards the wall to hide.

In the next moment, a powerful spiritual aura filled the entire place.

"Wuu! Wuuuuuu!"

The enraged monkey shrieked, and countless dark force hands were dancing around, almost covering the entire cavern.

"Whooo!"

A black shadow rushed forward and struck a claw out at Fang Yuan.

"Ha!"

The spiritual armour on Fang Yuan's body started to glitter. Channelling strength to his right hand, he struck his fist out.

"Bang!"

As the fist and claw met, Fang Yuan's expression changed. He flew backwards and cracks appeared on his spiritual armour.

Within seconds, it shattered and disintegrated into sparks.

"Wuu! Wuuuuu!"

The black enraged monkey was much more fierce than before. With its weird shriek, its third eye between its eyebrows opened, and a huge force landed on Fang Yuan.

"Whoosh!"

Not just that, but a dark streak of light shot out from its third eye, and it quickly landed on Fang Yuan.

'What the hell! How does it being possessed allow it to be stronger?'

Fang Yuan's expression changed and tried his best to break free from the force.

"Whoosh!"

The dark streak of light flew past its shoulders, destroying his elemental force armour. His clothing started to disintegrate, and even his golden body was not able to withstand it. A small part of his muscle started to dissolve, revealing an open wound.

"This power..."

"Whoosh!"

With a flash, Fang Yuan used his Shadowstep and escaped into a random tunnel, disappearing.

"What a powerful monkey. It was different from what it used to be..."

Without turning his head, he quickly ran.

"It seems to have the Seventh Elemental Force, comparable to when Nie Kuang was at his peak! Not just that, his third eye has two unique abilities. One of them is the Gravitational Technique, and the other would be that dark streak of light!"

Thinking about the ambush from the monkey king, even Fang

Yuan started to shudder in fear.

The intensity of that attack was enough to kill him!

"What a strong dark force... Furthermore, I could feel the evil intent of it..."

He rubbed the area between his eyebrows. While they were fighting, his dream elemental force from his Zu Qiao could detect the evil intent from the monkey king.

"Hatred, pain... It seems like a combination of negative feelings?"

Fang Yuan thought to himself. "Only a fool would pit himself against the unknown, not to mention that it was such a powerful adversary!"

Not far from him, there was a cry.

He was unclear if it was the Qin siblings who had encountered the monkey king, or sacrificial knights trying their best to distract the monkey king.

Taking this rare opportunity, Fang Yuan continued to explore his way and took a huge detour, finally reaching the deepest part of the cavern.

"I don't know how deep this cavern this. I can randomly pick a place and defend, and that should be no problem... Of course, the best would be for me to find an exit and escape from either the entrance where we came from or another exit!"

In the midst of rushing his way, Fang Yuan released his spiritual will in an attempt to find an exit.

"The tunnel ahead is a dead end!"

"The tunnel on the left has no air circulation, and from there comes the occasional roar. It will be likely to meet the spiritual monkey king there..."

"There's wind noises and water splashing from the hole in the right. There might be a hidden river or exposed exit!"

...

As he gathered all the information with his spiritual will, he quickly assessed each of them.

Using his Shadowstep, he rushed into the tunnel on the right.

"Whoooo! Whoo!"

As a gentle breeze was felt, a hidden river was revealed underneath.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

The water from the river was not clear. Instead, it was a green liquid. It was bubbling continuously and was continuously eroding the river banks on both sides.

"Wuu! Wuuuuuu!"

The monkey king was heard, and Fang Yuan could vaguely see a huge silhouette chasing from behind.

"Chi chi..."

Fang Yuan bent down and stretched his right hand into the river.

"Chichi!"

The corrosive river water was resisted by the elemental force and golden glow from his hand.

"... Never would I have thought that I would be forced to such an extent. Are the novels reliable? They always let the protagonist encounter a miracle after jumping into rivers, right?"

Fang Yuan's thoughts ran wild. With a splash, he leapt into the green river, displacing a huge amount of water.

As the green river water landed on the walls and the ground, it started to corrode holes, and from the holes came a white smoke.

"Splash!!!"

An even greater splash of water was heard.

It was the spiritual monkey king. Seeing Fang Yuan attempting to escape by jumping in, it couldn't care less and followed suit.

The river water started to corrode its fur, but the monkey king was protected by the dark force. With an exclamation, it tried to search for Fang Yuan.

...

Outside the mountain.

"Whoosh!"

As the ground exploded, an underground tunnel was revealed and Fang Yuan leapt out, looking at the sky.

The fog had dissipated long ago, and the clear was clear with a bright moon.

However, the moon had a red hue, as though it was signalling that something bad was about to happen.

"Has the Illusionary World completely combined with the real world?"

Fang Yuan laid on the ground and stared into the sky, looking depressed. "Indeed... the miracles that all the protagonists would encounter after jumping into rivers are all lies!"

He appeared extremely worn-out.

After being soaked in the corrosive river water, his clothing became tattered, even though it was protected by his elemental force. He now appeared like a beggar, and his golden skin was revealed.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

There was a rumbling sound from beneath, followed by a tremor as though there was an impending earthquake.

It was as though Fang Yuan could hear the exclamation from the monkey king.

"Why is it always following me!"

With a sigh, he looked for a direction and disappeared with his Shadowstep.

"Bang!"

Behind him, the cavern exploded, revealing the possessed monkey king's body. It screamed as it started to give chase.

The wind was rumbling!

As he was running, Fang Yuan started to notice changes in the area around him.

"This place looks weird... It seems that with the arrival of the Illusionary World, the rules of reality would change as well..."

"Or should I say, with the constant spread of dark force, this region is slowly transforming into a dream world... It's a pity that my dream building skills are still not strong enough in a highly-skilled dream master's dream world. Otherwise, I would be able to control all these!"

Fang Yuan took a quick glance at the spiritual monkey king, who was not giving up, and gritted his teeth,

"Wait a moment. Dream building!"

Suddenly, Fang Yuan's expression changed. With the flick of his fingers, the cliff ahead of him started to rumble and land appeared between both cliffs.

"My powers..."

Looking at his own hands, he was shocked. "I can use them? Could it be that this dream master is weaker than Yang Fan? No! This is not right..."

Fang Yuan came to another conclusion. "Could this be the peculiar property in Three World Mountains that would leave every dream master with their dream building powers? After all, this is not a complete dream world and there must be loopholes

within the rules for us to exploit..."

"Wuu! Wuuuuu!"

On the flat ground which was once a cliff, Fang Yuan stopped running.

Behind him was the aggressive spiritual monkey king giving chase.

Turning around, he was eager to test his powers. "Although I have proven that I have my dream building abilities, I am still unsure of how much I can do. I'll need to do an experiment!"

"Puff! Puff!"

Seeing the arrival of the monkey king, he casually snapped his fingers. Suddenly, vines appeared from the ground; they were metallic and were full of thorns like snakes. Within seconds, it trapped the monkey king.

The thorns from it started to break through the dark force's defence and went into its skin.

"Aw! Aww!"

The spiritual monkey king gave out a weird scream and pulled on the vines, breaking them.

"Still not strong enough..."

Fang Yuan looked at the scene and shook his head. "I cannot weaken him. Can I try strengthening myself..."

Although he only obtained an insignificant ability to alter the world, it was enough for Fang Yuan. The monkey king was no match for him.

Seeing the monkey king pouncing at him, he shrugged his shoulders. The ground beneath gave way, and the cliffs appeared once more.

The monkey king lost its footing and fell all the way down. Not

willing to give up, it struck its claws on the cliff walls.

"Get down!"

Fang Yuan stomped his foot on the ground. With a rumbling sound, a crack appeared and half of the cliff crumbled into rocks, which started to fall towards the monkey king.

With the threat of nature, even the monkey king could do nothing but grunt. It released its grip and fell into the abyss.

"This Illusionary World..."

Fang Yuan had already forgotten about the monkey king. Looking at everything around him, he had a look of disbelief and excitement.

"It is real and illusory at the same time! Mind could affect matter and consciousness could affect reality, and this is exactly what it meant!"

His dream master cultivation was put to a halt as he was unable to actualise things from his dream.

This was a chance for him!

This Illusionary World combined the real world with dreams. Just like a dream master, it was guiding Fang Yuan on how to do it, giving him inspiration to achieve a breakthrough.

"What is a dream? What is not a dream?"

The moon with a red hue was covered by a faint glow in the sky.

As the sun began to rise from the East, its golden rays spread far and wide, but it remained hidden within the clouds.

"Only I will know, who is the true master of this dream..."

Fang Yuan mumbled something to himself, closed his eyes and entered a mysterious state of nirvana.

Just as the sun was about to rise, banishing the Illusionary World and separating it from the real world, he held on to this

opportunity and started to comprehend the process of actualising his dreams in reality.

"Whoooo! Whooo!"

The mountain breeze caressed his face.

An unexpected thing happened.

An unknown energy brought along the dark force in the air, transforming it into a black snake which circled Fang Yuan. Suddenly, it pounced on him, engulfing him in within.

Fang Yuan was not conscious yet, and it was as though he had become a black hole, swallowing all the dark force around him...

From this, a mysterious force was born, which started to slowly push his cultivation as a dream master towards greater heights, attempting for a breakthrough!

Chapter 220: Chapter 220 Illusionary Divine

Fang Yuan felt as though he had slipped into a fairytale dream.

For dream masters to break through the Elemental Gathering Realm, they had to achieve the Illusionary Diving Stage. This could only be done by having a complete understanding of the rules of reality and releasing a huge amount of dream elemental force.

As for comprehending the rules of reality, he had already gathered enough experience in the past three years. Together with Yang Fan's dream world, he had enough understanding of the rules.

However, he still did not have the endurance to achieve a breakthrough. This was still true, even though he possessed an entire spiritual land!

But now, a continuous force seeped out from his limbs, getting ready to break through!

'I only wanted to... Understand the rules in this Illusionary World... what is happening now? Am I using the strength here to achieve a breakthrough?'

Fang Yuan was helpless as he looked at his Zu Qiao changing. Within his mind palace, his dream elemental force gathered continuously as he prepared for the breakthrough.

Of course, he wouldn't let go of this perfect opportunity. Concentrating, he made full use of the chance that was given to him!

With much focus, Fang Yuan could vaguely see a huge door which covered the skies and was as tall as a mountain.

That was the gate of the Illusionary Divine, and the difficulty level of breaking through this gate compared to the Opening Meridian stage of Wu Zong was unimaginable.

His dream elemental force rumbled and like a tsunami, it crashed onto the door.

"Whoosh!"

It was intense!

As the huge door shook, it remained closed.

Without thinking much, Fang Yuan quickly gathered his dream elemental force and tried once more.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Under the continuous crashing of waves, even the strongest door would crack. From the cracks, there was a colourful glow, and the glow intensified as more and more cracks appeared, as though it was about to explode.

That was the line which separates the real world and the dream world, the ability for the mind to affect matter!

...

Flash!

There were countless white flashes!

At the moment where the door crumbled, white light flowed into Fang Yuan's Zu Qiao, into his mind palace and his consciousness.

"Whoosh!"

A void was forced into his consciousness; this void was the link between illusory and reality.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

As the white flash sparked, it became weaker..... It started to spread far and wide, and finally, it became a small space with a radius of a few feet, and the height of about 8 inches.

"This is... my dream world! Actualising my dream world!"

In the middle of the space, there was a small person the size of a

figurine, which had the looks of Fang Yuan. This was his consciousness.

"My dream world! A dream master's actualised dream world is where the Illusionary Divine lies! Where my nest lie... it is the most crucial, and is the fort that allows me to defend from other dream masters!"

Since Fang Yuan had the inheritance from Master Heartless, he had an understanding of his actualised dream world.

"This dream world seems real and illusory at the same time, and is the foundation to everything else that I can actualise..."

"In my dream world, I can do anything!"

Fang Yuan looked at his feet. There was a layer of sand and nothing else in mid-air. He shook his head helplessly.

It was already not bad considering it was the first time for Fang Yuan to actualise his dream world.

"I want to know what is that force which assisted me in my breakthrough!"

Fang Yuan had a confused look. Suddenly, he waved his hands, and his clear voice was heard throughout the mountain "I am the master of my dream world, the king of this world!!!"

In his loud voice, he started to use his dream building skills. A flash appeared, which then transformed into a talisman. It was as though there were 9 Fire Dragons dancing around.

...

Three World Mountain.

On the peak of one of the mountains.

Fang Yuan who was deep in meditation suddenly opened his eyes.

"Actualise!"

He exerted his dream elemental force. Connecting himself with

his actualised dream world, a fiery-red talisman appeared in front of him, and the dragons were roaring and appearing mighty. His spiritual technique was impressive, and it was no weaker than that of the previous Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master, Liu Yan.

He could dream of thousands of spiritual techniques in a single dream! A dream spells master!

"Is this... the power to actualise?"

Looking at the talisman in front of him, Fang Yuan remained speechless. 'I have only seen him cast this spell once, and I can cast it myself now just by using dream elemental energy...'

To actualise spiritual spells, he only needed to exert energy. However, to actualise other objects, especially physical objects, it would be much harder.

Therefore, most dream masters would specialise as a dream spells master after achieving a breakthrough to the Illusionary Divine Stage.

"Then... What about a dream soldier master?"

Fang Yuan thought to himself.

Within his actualised dream world, a huge amount of dream elemental force condensed, forming the shape of a black dagger.

The actual world.

After a flash, a long metal piece landed in Fang Yuan's hands.

This metal was unpolished and was average in hardness; it barely resembled a dagger.

"This is real!"

After recovering from his shock, he frowned. "I've spent too much effort doing this. For such a piece of normal metal, the amount of dream elemental energy I have to spend is much more compared to the spiritual technique which I cast previously... Furthermore, it seems like a low-quality dagger. Could this be due

to the fact that I am not used to actualising objects? It seems that I am far from actualising magical weapons from my dreams..."

"I have not yet decided which path I am going to specialise into, but what I am sure of is that this dream elemental force is extremely important! I cannot waste it, and I'll have to use it wisely!"

Initially, Fang Yuan's dream elemental force was only used for him to cast his bewildering fog and Shadowstep, and there was a surplus of it all the time.

But now, he realised that he was going to run into a deficit of dream elemental force.

The power of actualising in the Illusionary Divine stage was extremely strong. To actualise an object, a lot of dream elemental force would have to be used up. Needless to say, it was not worth it for him to actualise valuable treasures as the consumption of dream elemental force would be more than the value of these treasures. Notwithstanding the fact that he was not at that level of cultivation yet, even if he were to be there, it would still not be worth it to exchange that amount of dream elemental force for the treasures.

Only those at the peak of the Illusionary Divine Stage could consider doing something as ambitious as this.

Thinking about this, Fang Yuan looked at his own stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 20

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Illusionary Divine (???)], Wu Zong (Third Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 4) (1%)],

Bewildering Spell, Shadowstep, Hundred Poison Golden Body
(First Refining)

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Illusionary Divine - You are not only the master of your dream world but also the divine person of the Illusionary World! Mind could affect matter and consciousness could affect reality, and being a divine person, you have the ability to alter reality!"

"What a breakthrough in my magical energy! A huge leap indeed!"

Fang Yuan rubbed the area between his eyebrows.

Previously, when his magical energy rose by a point or two, he would feel a stinging pain in his head.

But now, with such an increment to his magical energy, everything was absorbed by his actualised dream world, and he did not flinch a single bit.

"However... Magical energy is still not directly related to the consumption of my dream elemental force... If there is something more direct that I can use to measure my consumption, that would be good!"

In that instant, Fang Yuan thought of something.

Immediately, he was left dumbfounded as his stats window became blurred. Behind his magical energy, there was another blue bar!

That's right!

It was similar to the red bar he had which displayed his proficiency points, and it could accurately reflect each level.

It was not full; the blue bar was only about 80%-90% filled. It was the dream elemental force which he used up just now.

'Mm... If I would consume 1% of my dream elemental force everytime I cast my bewildering spell, then the actualising of a

spiritual technique would take up 5% or even a little more...'

Looking at the blue bar, Fang Yuan commented confidently.

Although he knew that the stats window only displayed what he already knew, this breakthrough and the new additions to the window still surprised him.

"Illusionary Divine is a huge stage, and the path to actualising objects is a long one..."

Fang Yuan clenched his fists and was brimming with self-confidence.

Yang Fan or his own master only reached the peak of the Illusionary Divine stage.

Even so, they were still respectable and highly skilled people in Da Qian empire already.

An Illusionary Divine dream master!

If Fang Yuan had such a cultivation level in Yang Fan's dream world previously, he would not settle for a mere Eagle Lieutenant appointment.

"Wuu! Wuuuuu!"

Accompanying the growl, a huge shadow leapt from the walls of the cliffs, making its way up. It was the spiritual monkey king.

It was filled with rage and energy like a burning inferno, and its bloodshot eyes were fierce. However, as it looked at Fang Yuan, it hesitated.

"Why would you hesitate?"

Fang Yuan thought about it. "Can you feel something different about me?"

He smiled and heaved a breath.

"Roar! Roar!"

A red talisman which was floating around him exploded,

revealing 9 red fiery dragons. These dragons started to roar ferociously and rushed towards the monkey king.

"Rumble! Rumble!"

As the dragons spit fire, the entire place became a burning inferno. It was as though a fiery pill was burning in the centre of the inferno.

"Chi! Chi!"

The spiritual monkey king was burnt throughout as it wailed in pain. The dark force from its body started to rise up.

After all, it was time for the separation of the Illusionary World, and the force from the dark force would slowly weaken.

"What a good beast!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. Another green talisman was tossed out from his actualised dream world.

"Elemental energy of the Nine Heavens, hear my command, strike!"

"Whooo! Whoooo!"

Suddenly, another 9 green dragons flashed and appeared next to Fang Yuan. Quickly, they became tornados and swirled themselves at the monkey king.

The fire was growing in the wind!

As the wind blew, the fire grew even stronger, and the power of the dragons were many folds of what it was last time!

As the inferno on the monkey king's body raged, it let out an ear-piercing shriek.

"Roar! Roar!"

In the wind and fire, the red dragons and the green dragons combined and fused together. Their power multiplied and the entire mountain was set on fire.

...

Quite some time passed, and Fang Yuan arrived at a scorched piece of land.

Hints of dark mists gathered, fused and landed on his palm.

He remained expressionless. Seeing the dark force making its own way into his palm, the originally consumed dream elemental force was replenished. "Indeed, I must have had the help from this dark force to achieve the breakthrough to Illusionary Divine Stage."

Fang Yuan let out a sigh and glanced at a distance.

Chapter 221: Ten Extremes

Once the Illusionary Divine stage was attained, it would become extremely powerful. The spiritual monkey king, which once struck fear in Fang Yuan's heart, could not even withstand him now.

Regardless, Fang Yuan appeared calm.

In his actualised dream world, he composed himself and waved his hands. "Dream elemental force!!!"

"Whoosh!"

His dream elemental force surged out like waves crashing, engulfing his actualised dream world in a thin layer of bewildering fog.

As the mercury-like dream elemental force was being consumed, the bottom was slowly revealed and everything seemed normal.

"Something's not right!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands, gathering a hint of dream elemental force. As the dream elemental force rose into the air, it glittered in the sunlight.

"Condense!"

As he concentrated, the dream elemental force fused in front of him, taking up the shape of a silvery mirror as it slowly expanded.

Following which, on the reflective mirror surface, a dim red hue flashed across like a tiny snake slithering about, bringing with it a sinister feel.

"Damn... the dark force!"

In the real world, Fang Yuan appeared depressed.

He had no more doubt that the dark force aided him in achieving a breakthrough to the Illusionary Divine stage!

"Like the spiritual monkey king, I am affected by the dark force

too... This might just be the highest level of being possessed!"

Fang Yuan gritted his teeth. "I need to find a way to get rid of it! And before that, I should leave the Three World Mountain as soon as possible!"

He did not want to end up like the spiritual monkey king and become a monster.

Although he was still clueless if his breakthrough was by accident or caused by the dark force, he wanted to leave Three World Mountain regardless, and the further the better.

At this point in time.

A purple glow rose from the east as the sun began to rise, pouring its golden rays across the vast mountains.

Fang Yuan could sense that the Illusionary World was already separating from the Three World Mountain.

Under the sunlight, the shadows slowly disappeared, and even the possessed spiritual monkeys started to faint. Black fogs were starting to rise from their heads.

"If not for the fact that this experience was extremely real, I would have mistaken it for a bad nightmare myself!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and returned to the spiritual monkey king's nest.

Many well-built monkeys were lying on the floor and all of them appeared to have suffered heavy injuries. Fortunately, all of them were still alive.

With his current Illusionary Divine power, it would be a snap of his fingers for him to deal with the monkeys if they decide to surround and attack him together. With confidence, he slowly walked into the cavern and began his search for survivors.

"Bang!"

A wall of shattered rocks broke open.

Seeing the disfigured corpse of Elder Zhou, Fang Yuan remain speechless.

Till his last breath, this person was still holding on tightly to his scimitar with a ferocious look, like a loyal guard.

"Rest in peace!"

Fang Yuan helped Elder Zhou to close his eyes before looking around. However, he could not locate the Qin siblings.

"Elder Zhou and the few Black Feathers Cavalry are dead... could the Qin siblings have a hope of survival?"

Turning around a corner, he found a pool of blood and a few miscellaneous items and shattered weapons. They seemed to be the belongings of one of the Black Feathers Cavalry.

The reason why these people were willing to die and be sacrificed was to fight for the survival of the Qin siblings.

"Based on where the spiritual monkey king has gone to, the amount of time that passed and the power of the other spiritual monkeys..."

Fang Yuan turned around and walked into the underground cavern.

The thick tree stump appeared destroyed, and the pool of wine within it was now empty. Its roots were now shrivelled and it looked extremely pitiful.

"It's not here?"

Using his magical will to sense the surroundings, Fang Yuan frowned. With the wave of his hands, a spiritual spell appeared. "That's alright... Let's test this spiritual searching spell out!"

This was the power he had after achieving the Illusionary Divine stage!

As long as he had enough dream elemental force, he could reproduce any spiritual spell which he had come across before.

After drawing it out in his actualised dream world, he would be able to actualise it in the real world!

With this ability alone, he would be able to defeat most spiritual knights from the Elemental Opening Realm.

"Weng!"

As his spiritual spell exploded, a white flash was seen.

With the wave of his sleeves, two spiritual auras appeared before dissolving in the white flash.

It was important not to let one's guard down!

These two spiritual auras were secretly obtained from the Qin siblings, and he had done so to prevent them from secretly attacking him.

However, from the looks of the situation, it seemed that these two spiritual auras were needed to initiate the spiritual searching spell.

"Whoosh!"

The white flash condensed into a ball of light, which then casually floated. Suddenly, it floated above the empty wine pool, circled it before it stopped moving.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan was surprised. As he leapt into the dry pool, he remained speechless looking at the moist walls and smelling the wine fragrance.

In the middle of the wine pool, the ordinary looking base of the pool felt soft, as though there was a warm body underneath it.

Feeling the base with his right hand, he quickly grabbed on to something before pulling it up.

A bright flash appeared and suddenly, there were two other people underneath; they were the pale-looking Qin siblings.

Their eyes were shut and they were shivering as though they were in a nightmare. Most of their protective talismans were already destroyed and they appeared extremely weak.

"This concealment cloak..."

As Fang Yuan examined the silvery concealment cloak in his hands, his eyes glittered.

The concealment cloak was reflective and it was as though there were waves flowing on it. It appeared mysterious and glittery.

"A treasure that can completely conceal one's spiritual aura? Even my spiritual will can't detect them..."

Fang Yuan mumbled to himself. "Although it is still unable to hide from the spiritual searching spell, it is already impressive enough..."

As he examined the cloth, he slowly kept it without giving a thought. After it was folded, it was only the size of a fist, and as thin as an insect's wings, which made it extremely mysterious.

"However, since I've found you two..."

Looking at the both of them hugging each other tightly, he laughed. "It's your luck!"

...

In the dream, there were swords slashing around, and the grunting from the monkeys.

It was as though the scene of Elder Zhou's fierce look and the unrelenting Black Feathers Cavalry appeared in front of his eyes.

"Young master... leave!"

The bloodied faces of the 18 Black Feathers Cavalry appeared and approached him.

"Ah!"

Qin Yun screamed and opened his eyes.

"This is... water!"

Wiping off the sweat from his face, he looked around at his surroundings. It was a dense forest, and there was a small stream flowing. There was a thin layer of fog as well.

"Brother Yun, since you're awake, get on your feet!"

Following, Qin Yun was kicked. "We'll have to leave Three World Mountain, latest by tonight!"

"It's Master Fang Yuan!"

Qin Yun stood up, looked at his sister and blushed. She was standing up and dripping wet, and her figure could be seen. "Did you save us from the spiritual monkey king's cavern?"

He was still thinking about the scene which they played dead in the wine pool.

It goes without saying that Qin Qing was the one who came up with the idea, hoping to get a chance at survival by playing dead. They were fortunate that Fang Yuan really returned to rescue them, otherwise, both of them would have died inside.

"Mm, it's me. Let's go!"

Looking at both of them shivering, Fang Yuan did not feel any pity for them at all as he commanded them to move.

"Elder Zhou..."

Qin Qing mumbled something subconsciously before remaining silent.

Their loyal servant and 17 other brothers were left dead in the mountains.

"Let's go, brother!"

Qin Qing walked up, held on to her brother's shoulder and displayed maturity and strength that someone her age would not have.

"We'll reach Da Qian Empire soon. Don't you want to take revenge for them?"

"I want to... take revenge!"

Qin Yun clenched his teeth. "I will take over the Qin Family and become a powerful person!"

...

It was a vast desert plain after the Three World Mountain.

At the horizon, a continuous mountainous vein formed a defensive line, and there was another obstacle for them to go through, which was known as the Ten Extremes!

The Ten Extremes were heavily guarded by the generals of Da Qian Empire, and they would send out patrolling guards to patrol the defensive line. Anyone who would attempt to escape Da Qian would become a fugitive and be given the death sentence!

Of course, if the fugitives had traveled through the desert plains and the Three World Mountain before deciding to come back to Da Qian Empire, they would have to go through the dangers in the Ten Extremes.

Nightfall.

As a fire burnt, a snake was being roasted on it and the air was filled with its roasted fragrance.

"It's done!"

Fang Yuan took a piece of snake meat at looked at the Qin siblings. "Since we have reached the border of Da Qian, our agreement has come to an end..."

"We are eternally grateful for Master's aid in protecting us all the way to here!"

Qin Qing took a bow. After dressing up, her actions revealed her beautiful figure, with a hint of seduction.

She was a smart person.

After the death of Elder Zhou and the 18 Black Feathers Cavalry, she could only rely on Fang Yuan now.

Furthermore, it was no small feat for Fang Yuan to be able to bring them out safely from Three World Mountain; he would be considered rather skilled even among those in Da Qian Empire.

"However... it will be hard for us to go through the Ten Extremes!"

Qin Qing took another bow and her face was filled with sincerity. "Master, please bring both of us along through the Ten Extremes! To be honest, we are members of the Qin Family. Brother Yun is the next heir to take control of the family! If you would help us, we would be extremely grateful and will repay your kindness after we've taken control of the family!"

As Fang Yuan heard her offer, he was lost for words.

Most of the time, these would be empty promises. Furthermore, most of the protective treasures and talismans were already used up while they were travelling through the Illusionary World. The only thing they could offer was themselves.

Although Qin Qing was pleading him, she was not extremely desperate to the extent of giving up a city or country for him.

"Alright!"

Looking at the Qin siblings, whose faces were illuminated by the fire, he smiled. "Since we've journeyed to this point, shouldn't you introduce me to the Qin Family?"

Fang Yuan did not have any concrete plans for his trip to Da Qian Empire.

Although Qin Family was powerful, it was not the most powerful family. Therefore, it could be a good place for him to stay in Da Qian Empire.

Although he had learnt the Da Qian Language and literature in Yang Fan's dream world and even got appointed as the Eagle Lieutenant, it was considered a long time ago and there would be changes now.

He needed stability to completely integrate into Da Qian Empire.
Wouldn't it be a good idea to start from the Qin Family?

Chapter 222: Taking Action

"The Da Qian Empire stretches thousands of miles. There are 99 regions in the whole empire and 587 counties. The capital of the empire is Jade City!"

"The Qin Family is based in the desert region Northwest of the capital, in Dongyi County. Our ancestors wanted to start our own country and fought battles in the desert. After a hundred wars, we have finally won. From then, the next heir would be the sons of the previous master of the family..."

...

The flames were flickering.

As night came, Qin Qing sat next to the fire and was speechless.

As she slowly described, a powerful family, many times more powerful than Yang Fan's family, appeared in Fang Yuan's mind.

"If what you say is true, then the Qin Family must be the most influential family in Dongyi County! The family master would automatically pass down his power to the next generation, and they would have 500 soldiers each at their disposal... Because of this, the few most powerful people in the family would be the elders, who would be either Meridian Opening Wu Zongs or Elemental Opening spiritual knights."

"And your main enemy is the First Wife, Lady Xu? She is the eldest daughter in the Xu Family and has a strong influence. Is it true that one of her ancestors is a spiritual array master at the Elemental Opening Stage?"

Fang Yuan asked casually without any respect.

Once a dream master achieves the Illusionary Divine Stage, his power would multiply by many folds, and he would give no regard to normal spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Realm or Wu Zongs in the Meridian Opening Stage.

Spiritual array masters would still give him a little trouble but that was all.

"Look at Da Qian Empire! Even a small county like Dongyi County would have so many spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Realm! Of course... any county in Da Qian Empire would be as large as a country in the mainland, like Yuan Country or Wu Country..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and took in a deep breath.

This was still the desert between Three World Mountain and the Ten Extremes, and hardly any life was seen here. However, he could already feel the elemental energy building up in the surroundings.

It was impossible to breed a dragon in a tiny pond!

Although this was only the boundary of Da Qian Empire, it was already filled with elemental energy, which was enough to convince Fang Yuan to stay.

"This is only the desert plains. If this was Da Qian Empire, I'm sure the spiritual energy and elemental energy would be many folds of what I have at Green Peak spiritual land!"

Fang Yuan sighed in his heart.

After thinking to himself, he saw Qin Yun gobbling the snake which they just cooked, which made him laugh to himself.

...

The moon and the stars were bright in the night sky.

Fang Yuan crossed his legs and appeared to be sleeping.

As he linked his consciousness to his actualised dream world, the Fang Yuan figurine appeared serious. One of his hands was pointed up to the sky while the other was pressing against the ground. His dream elemental force was surging as it pushed outwards on the limits of the actualised dream world.

"The cultivation of Illusionary Divine is to find out one's true power and embark on the process to slowly advance to the peak..."

Fang Yuan focused as his dream elemental force began to condense.

Although it was hidden, he could detect a hint of red-coloured dark force among his dream elemental force; it was like a leech, impossible to get rid of.

"It seems like I'm really possessed..."

Controlling his dream elemental force, he continuously tried to use up all of it to wash the dark force out, but to no avail. "Fortunately, I was able to walk out safely from the Three World Mountain. This must be an accident... Regardless, it is still not a good thing for the dark force to linger about in my body!"

He could feel that he had brought trouble to himself.

Suddenly, there was a tremor.

In the real world, on the desert plains, the crossed-legged Fang Yuan opened his eyes as they glittered. "Get up!"

The Qin siblings clumsily got to their feet. Their sleepy faces turned into a serious one. "Are these... cavalry units?"

"Don't worry. The Xu Family and Lady Xu, both of them do not have such influence to make the guards of the Ten Extremes work for them. Those killers who would go after you two would only be found in Dongyi County."

Fang Yuan looked ahead. "This should be their routine patrols to catch fugitives!"

Qin Qing and Qin Yun both shuddered.

This was a message from the Da Qian Imperial Family! Any citizens from Da Qian Empire who escape would become a fugitive and would be killed on sight!

Not just that, but the guards of the Ten Extremes were the best

guards of Da Qian Empire. They would go on patrols often and would actively attack those they deem guilty. If they were to come across both of them, they would surely not let them go.

"No! We can't let them spot us!"

Qin Qing clenched her teeth.

No one would know that they had escaped.

As long as they could go through the guards of the Ten Extremes undetected, no one would know that they were fugitives! They wouldn't send people to Desert City to check on their background.

The crux was this; they could not let the guards hold any evidence to prove that they were seen in the desert plains!

Therefore, the first reaction of Qin Qing when she saw the incoming cavalries was to run.

"I'm afraid it's too late!"

Fang Yuan shook his head. "Furthermore, there's another way for them to not know of your existence here. We can kill all of these guards! Isn't that a solution too?"

"What did you just say?"

Qin Qing and Qin Yun were stunned. Slowly, they realised that the master which they have placed all their hopes on was a madman.

...

"Hurry up! Catch them!"

Under the moonlight, a group of people was escaping. All of them had strong spiritual auras and the leader among them was an old man, who was a Wu Zong. He was guarding a few young men.

"The heavens are not fair! It was obvious that Nishui Sect was the one colluding with the governor, wrongly accusing us, the Nine Suns Sect as traitors, causing our sect master to be locked up in jail

and tortured to death. We have already tried our best to appeal, but the officials and the governor would surely protect each other, which ultimately forced us out of Da Qian Empire..."

The old Wu Zong exclaimed as tears welled up in his eyes.

"Kill!"

Behind him were heavily-armoured cavalries and all of them appeared ferocious.

The leader had a little mustache at the side of his mouth and had the appearance of a bully. With a cunning laughter, he continued. "We have nothing to do with these internal disputes! I only know of the order that whoever trespasses the guards of the Ten Extremes would be labeled as fugitives, and we would be credited with killing you people!"

"Right now, all of you have escaped Da Qian on your own accord. Therefore, all of you are fugitives! Face your death!"

"Whoosh!"

As he spoke, he pulled his metal bowed released an arrow upwards, and the arrow fell down like a raindrop.

A disciple of the Nine Suns Sect was shot in the chest, and blood spurted everywhere as he fell to the ground.

"These are the talents of our Nine Suns Sect!"

The old Wu Zong's face was flushed as he spat out a mouthful of blood. Quickly, he pushed a young man away. "Bring young master away. I'll hold them up! Spiral Qigong!"

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Two energy auras appeared, which subsequently transformed into spirals. The surging energy held the cavalries back.

"Lu!"

As the dust was stirred, a young man held the reins to the horse.

The metal bow on his hands was already broken, and he appeared solemn. "You old fogey, since you want death so much, I, Lin Quannan, shall give it to you!"

As he waved his hands, a figure of elemental force appeared.

This young man was also a Wu Zong. Similar to Fang Yuan's experience in Yang Fan's dream world, he was enlisted in the army as the Eagle Lieutenant!

Furthermore, his first move was a killer move and had the vibes of a powerful commander. In no time, he had subdued the old Wu Zong.

"Iron Blood Fighting Energy! Ten Bloodied Styles!"

The young man, Lin Quannan exclaimed. From his four limbs, a dark red elemental force seeped out, bring with it a strong iron smell. The elemental force combined to become his armour and the design on the armour was extremely intricate.

However, what was more interesting was his Ten Bloodied Styles. Every move of his was extremely simple but effective. It gave off the vibe of a commander and the feel that even if he were to die on the battlefield, he would bring the enemy with him. Without reservations, he pressured the old Wu Zong to his limits.

This young man, Lin Quannan, might even be one step away from Meridian Opening Stage and could breakthrough anytime!

"Pu!"

On the horizon of the desert plains, there were silhouettes of people fighting.

The old Wu Zong could not withstand his opponent's moves. He had endured a palm on his chest, before another claw. His hand flew away as blood spurted out.

"Elder Han..."

The people of Nine Suns Sect were in chaos. The young master

was full of tears but was held back by a few loyal disciples as they retreated towards Three World Mountain.

Due to the mysterious nature of the place, even spiritual knights of the Elemental Opening Realm or Wu Zongs would not dare to enter into the depths of the mountain, not to mention chasing all the way to Desert City.

Therefore, it was a victory for those escaping Da Qian Empire to make it to Three World Mountain.

However, for the people of Nine Suns Sect, the distance to the mountain was akin to a step to Heaven.

"Black Tiger Guards, listen to my command. 1st group and 2nd group are to surround them. Don't let a single one of them escape!"

Lin Quannan returned to his horse and gave a confident look. "3rd group, patrol around the area. 4th group..."

He pointed towards the direction of the campsite which Fang Yuan had set up. "It seems like there was the flicker of fire in that direction. Check it out, and if you see any fugitives, kill on sight! You don't need to ask me for permission!"

"Yes, Sir!"

The guards split into groups behind him and they were all extremely ordered.

"Ah!"

"What is this?"

"A vine monster? Be careful, this is a spiritual knight's spiritual spell!"

...

Suddenly, there was a commotion in the direction which the 4th group had set of towards.

"Hisss! Hiss!"

With the hissing sound, there was a wave of grass growing. The originally barren piece of land started to have life, and the roots of the vegetation started to grow rapidly like dancing ghosts and quickly, the horses' feet were tangled up.

"Wood-type spiritual spell?"

Lin Quannan slit his wrists and poured warm blood over the roots.

"Sizzle!"

As his blood was poured over the grass, white steam appeared and the grass started to shrivel up and rot as though they had met their nemesis.

"A Wu Zong's blood is Yang in nature. Although I cannot counter spiritual spells using spiritual meridians like those Wu Zongs of Meridian Opening Stage, my blood can counter the most basic spiritual spells!"

Lin Quannan let out a long laughter. "Which cowardly being dares to ambush me?"

In reality, it was not because of the fact that his blood was magical and was able to break the spiritual spell. Rather, it was because he had learnt a secret spell and was purely harnessing it.

Otherwise, a normal Wu Zong's blood would not be able to threaten Fang Yuan's spiritual spell.

"He has only countered one of my spiritual spells. How dare he be so full of himself..."

A soft sound was heard from all directions and the people of Nine Suns Sect were filled with happiness, as though they had met their saviour.

"Sha! Sha!"

As the soft sound came to an end, waves of grasses started to rumble from all directions, and the scale of it this time was many

folds larger than before.

"How is this possible? Could this be a spiritual array, casting so many spiritual spells at once?"

Lin Quannan's face was filled with disbelief as he struggled to comment.

Chapter 223: Boss Wan

This spiritual spell was extremely powerful and the person who cast it must not be an ordinary spiritual knight.

Furthermore, it was unaffected even after being countered by the blood from Lin Quannan, and the subsequent waves were even more powerful.

All of these traits led Lin Quannan to believe that he was facing a spiritual array!

Only a spiritual array could have such a continuous effect of casting spiritual spells!

"No... It's not right! Although a spiritual array is powerful, it requires a lot of effort in casting it. How would he know that I would be here? Could the enemy be a master predictor?"

As he was lost in his thoughts, the vines danced wildly and were like whips, trapping his beloved horse.

"Get down your horses and gather at where I am!"

Lin Quannan wielded his knife. After a few slices, the vines around him flew about, revealing an empty plot of land.

The remaining guards gathered towards him, but a few unfortunate ones were being blinded by the vines as their shrieked. The vines cut through their skin and sucked their blood dry. In a matter of seconds, they were breathless and had become a dried corpse.

"Demonic!"

Lin Quannan cut his palm once more, dripping his blood everywhere. With his fellow guards, who were all afraid, his face was flushed. "What a demon! How dare you ambush against government officials! You are dead! No one from the heavens would be able to save you!"

"Chi! Chi!"

As he spoke, countless vines slithered towards him like a bunch of snakes. As they leapt into the circle, they were countered by the blood and sizzled.

"Keke... You are facing your death now and you still dare to be so full of yourself!"

The soft voice travelled once more.

Following, there was a red glow in the depths of the grass plains. The red glow slowly grew and finally, it became a burning inferno!

"Rumble!"

In the inferno, there were 9 red dragons slithering in mid-air. They were all chasing a bright-red dragon pearl.

A secret spell - Heavenly Fiery Dragons!

Amidst the roaring, the flaming inferno scorched the grass plains, surrounding Lin Quannan and his guards.

"A Double-typed spiritual knight?"

Lin Quannan held his nose and retrieved a token from his waist.

The token was an alloy of bronze and pure gold, and there was an image of an eagle soaring carved on it. On the back of the token, there were small inscriptions.

At this point in time, an array was activated. It was a defensive array and as it was activated, a streak of light shot upwards, and it was shocking to behold.

"Sir, be careful. This is an imperial token. They have already informed the Ten Extremes. We must destroy them before their reinforcements arrive!"

As the Nine Suns Sect Wu Zong witnessed this, he shouted loudly.

He had no idea that Fang Yuan already knew about it.

Seeing a translucent shield breaking his fiery glow, Fang Yuan quickly called for the winds in his actualised dream world. Without hesitation, another green-coloured wind spiritual spell was cast.

"Whoosh!"

In the real world, a tornado was brewing and numerous green dragons appeared. Slowly, they fused together with the fiery dragons, which quickly increased the power and effect of the spiritual spell!

"Even a Triple-typed spiritual knight would not be able to cast such powerful spells in such a short period of time!"

Seeing his protective shield cave inwards as though it was about to give way, Lin Quannan's face was filled with shock. "You're not a spiritual knight... but... dream spells..."

"Rumble!"

In the next moment, under the clawing of the green dragons, the protective shield crumbled. Smoke and fire filled the entire place.

...

"I am Han Yangkun of the Nine Suns Sect. Together with me is the young master, Dong Fanglie. We thank you, Sir, for saving our lives!"

After a while, Han Yangkun could finally see his benefactors. They were two men and a lady, and all three of them were covered with a shawl over their faces.

After all, Fang Yuan wanted to enter Da Qian Empire and it would not do him any good to reveal his real appearance. This was especially so since they have gotten themselves involved in a murder case.

Han Yangkun could understand this point and directly bowed towards Fang Yuan, who appeared to be the leader among the

three of them.

"You people from the Nine Suns Sect must have a spy among the Ten Extremes in order for all of you to come out safely, right? If you want to show your gratitude, bring him to me!"

Fang Yuan was direct and to the point.

Although the Qin Family had their own connections, the current situation would make their own connections less trustworthy.

"No problem!"

Han Yangkun replied without hesitation. "It is my honour to serve you, Sir! However... how should we deal with him?"

He looked at the burnt place where the fiery dragons struck.

The only thing left was the charred guards. As for Lin Quannan, although he had suffered many burns and was unconscious, he was still breathing. He was indeed a gifted Wu Zong.

Lin Quannan was well-known among the Ten Extremes and was gifted in martial arts. He started at the age of 8 and achieved a breakthrough to Wu Zong at 20. Naturally, with his skills came all the honour and recognition he deserved.

But now, he was just a pile of bloodied mess. A dead talent would be of no use.

No one could predict what would happen next, and everything could come to an end in an instant.

"How do we deal with him? Of course to kill him!"

Fang Yuan smiled coldly, which made Han Yangkun shudder. Although he had already guessed Fang Yuan's intentions, he was still shocked.

"Furthermore, either you or your young master will have to be the one to kill him!"

Fang Yuan laid out another condition. "Since all of you are

escaping, are you afraid that the officials from Da Qian Empire would come after you?"

Han Yangkun went pale and looked towards Dong Fanglie.

The young master bit on his lips. He knew that if he were to do it, they would no longer be able to return to Da Qian Empire.

'But if we don't do it, I'm afraid the entire sect will die here! Since he was asking about the way to bypass the Ten Extremes, it's obvious that he wants to secretly make his way back in. He will not be able to give us trouble in the future...'

Thoughts were running wild in Han Yangkun's head, but all he showed was a wide smile. "Sir, you're right... The Three World Mountain is mysterious. It is alright for us lowly beings to enter. The higher the cultivation of a person, the greater the chance to encounter the Illusionary World. This is a natural obstacle. Therefore, what do we have to fear?"

Taking two steps forward, his remaining hand struck down forcefully.

"Chi!"

Blood spurted everywhere.

This heavily injured young gifted Wu Zong, the Eagle Lieutenant of Da Qian, had become a subject for testing.

"Very well. You are trustworthy enough!"

As the mysterious spiritual knight chuckled, it was like the murmuring ghosts in the ears of the young master of the Nine Suns Sect.

...

Although the Ten Extremes were heavily militarised, there were still commoners living there.

In the desert plains, which was between the Three World Mountain and the defensive line of the Ten Extremes, there were a

few special resources, like an extremely valuable quarry and a few species of special and unique medicinal herbs.

This was why the commoners of the Ten Extremes or even the businessmen and soldiers were reliant on these resources for their survival, forming a perfect model for business to thrive.

Of course, as these resources were being transported, there would be smugglers.

For instance, by paying lower taxes, they would profit more. There were many who would risk their lives for elemental crystals.

Han Yangkun had presented to Fang Yuan a way of communication between the smugglers.

At the mysterious point where three rivers met, Qin Qing lit up some smoke. After a long while, they could see around 10 horses galloping their way towards them.

Although they were nowhere as well-equipped as the guards from Da Qian, they were all still well-built and had murderous vibes, as though killing was their second nature.

"Where is Han Yangkun? Why is he not dead yet?"

The cavalries in front gave way, revealing an old man dressed in tattered clothing. He was extremely skinny and his eyes were darting around like a mouse.

"Boss Wan!"

Fang Yuan walked out from the shadows and waved his hands.

All the riders were 4 Heavenly Gate martial artists. However, the most crucial point was that Boss Wan, although unappealing, was a spiritual knight!

Without such a strong backing, how would these cavalries dare to travel thus far to trade?

"You are..."

Boss Wan had a suspicious look in his eyes.

From Fang Yuan, he could sense danger. It was a secret spiritual knight technique of his own, of which he had used multiple times to escape from danger. There was no way he could be wrong about Fang Yuan.

"That's not important. The most important is the fact that you are a businessman of integrity, and that you would recognise this, right?"

Fang Yuan laughed and threw out a black dagger blade.

"You are indeed the person that Elder Han recommended!"

Boss Wan took out a dagger's handle and pieced it together with the blade. It was a perfect match, and he nodded his head. "The few of you, are you all looking for a way in?"

"That's right! Please assist us, Boss Wan!"

Fang Yuan clapped his hands and Qin Yun brought a large sack over to Boss Wan.

"Elemental crystals? These are low-quality ones!"

Boss Wan nodded his head and one of the riders went forward to take a look at the contents of the sack.

"A thousand elemental crystals for each person! I'm sure the price is still the same, right?"

Fang Yuan enquired directly.

"Of course not..."

Boss Wan rolled his eyes about as his mind went through a list of fugitives who had just escaped Da Qian. Slowly, he shook his head. He could not think of any fugitives who would want to risk their lives by entering Da Qian from the desert plains.

No one in Da Qian knew about the issue in Qin Family yet, and no outside would be able to see their motives.

Needless to say, there were no records of Fang Yuan in Da Qian.

"I have something to clarify!"

Boss Wan smiled. "I have a path which links into Da Qian, and this path is able to bring you into the Ten Extremes. However, those without an identity imprint will not be allowed to enter the final gate into Da Qian. Spiritual talismans are used to ensure security over there. Previously, Elder Han could go through the gate smoothly as he was escaping Da Qian, but it is different for the three of you..."

"Identity imprint? Can we take a look at it?"

Fang Yuan thought for a while before asking.

"Of course!"

Boss Wan nodded his head, and the previous rider came forward and revealed his left arm.

On his arm, there was a tattoo-like imprint. It was engraved deep into his arm and into his veins, and on it, there was a little spiritual glow.

"It is a miniature spiritual array and is bound to our circulatory system, which makes it non-transferrable!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and exclaimed. "We just want to enter the Ten Extremes. Please show us the way, Boss Wan!"

"No problem!"

Elder Wan nodded his head in confusion.

The guards of the Ten Extremes had the equipment to check for the identity imprints. If they did not have it, they would be labelled as fugitives and would be killed.

Why would these three people dare to enter? Were they thinking of hiding inside the Ten Extremes? This would be impossible! Could they have people in the Ten Extremes waiting for them?

After a series of exchanges, Boss Wan felt that the three of them were extremely mysterious.

Chapter 224: Passing Through the Gates

Along the streets in the Ten Extremes, there was the vibe of Da Qian empire everywhere, ranging from the architecture to the clothing. The Qin Siblings stared into space and felt as though everything was a dream.

Although it was pricey to engage Boss Wan's services, it was worth it. He managed to bring them around the most dangerous parts of the Ten Extremes and successfully brought them into the Ten Extremes.

Of course, as soon as they arrived at a safe location, Boss Wan immediately left the three of them alone. It was obvious that he did not want to be associated with the three of them, as they had no identity imprints.

"This is Da Qian?"

Fang Yuan took a deep breath.

Although he had once experienced life in Da Qian Empire through Yang Fan's dream world, it was still a different feeling to personally be here.

"Let's find a place to stay for the night before planning ahead!"

With his spiritual will, he could detect that danger was lurking everywhere in the city. There were guards patrolling at every moment, along the streets with lowly-built buildings.

"We'll listen to you, Sir!"

The Qin Siblings knew that they were still not yet out of danger and therefore agreed without hesitation.

An hour later, they were in a restaurant.

And the ground floor, it was bustling and the entire place was filled with the fragrance of wine and meat, making them salivate.

It was hard to find a hostel within the Ten Extremes. After a long

while, the Qin Siblings found a restaurant which offered lodging. As for the lodging? They had to show their identity imprints!

"It's not too bad now. During night time, the Ten Extremes would undergo a lockdown and the guards would increase the frequency of their patrols. If you have an identity imprint, you would be warned on your first offence, fined on your second and made a slave on your third offence! For those without identity imprints like us, we would be killed on sight!"

Qin Qing had a worried look on her face. Although there was a sumptuous meal on the table, she had no appetite.

"To us, although we have already passed through the most dangerous borders of the Ten Extremes, there are still a few gates to pass through if we want to reach Da Qian, and all of these gates would require us to show our identity imprints..."

Qin Yun was worried. "Should we inform those in our family that are on our side? Judging by our influence, we should be able to make a few fake identities, right?"

"That is not possible!"

Qin Qing shook her head in disagreement. "We cannot let any outsiders know that we have left Da Qian!"

If the first lady in their family, Lady Xu, were to find out that they had escaped the empire, she would insist that they were fugitives and they would no longer have the hope of taking over the family.

"Identity imprints? I have them!"

Fang Yuan reached into his robes, but in reality, in his actualised dream world, three identity imprints appeared.

"How is this possible... How did you get them?"

Qin Qing's eyes glittered.

"Don't worry about how I got them. You only need to know that

it is likely to pass through the most basic equipment when checked..."

As for the more sophisticated methods of checking the authenticity of the imprints, for instance, a check by spiritual array masters, Fang Yuan knew that these toys wouldn't be able to deceive their way through.

"These two identity imprints do not have owners. In order to activate the spiritual array on it, it will require your spiritual auras!"

Fang Yuan reached his hand out.

"Whoosh!"

As the energy flowed in, Qin Yun felt as though he had lost something as he looked in confusion.

As he received his own identity imprint, he could see the miniature spiritual array being activated on it as it revealed a spiritual glow.

"Very good! It seems that it's working!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. Looking out to the streets, he could see a group of guards approaching.

"Go and test the effectiveness of this identity imprint!"

He bit his lips and ordered Qin Yun in a strict tone.

"What?"

Qin Yun turned pale in shock.

He knew that this was a fake and the act of challenging the guards with a fake identity imprint gave him the chills. After all, he was still a young boy.

"If we must test it out, then I will..."

Qin Qing bit her lips and stood up.

"No!"

Fang Yuan stopped her with his palm and looked at Qin Yun. "You do know that you are back here to take control of your family, right? If you are unwilling to take such a small risk, how would I be able to trust you and depend on your family?"

Qin Yun gritted his teeth. Suddenly, he thought of Elder Zhou and the 18 Black Feathers Cavalry and promptly stood up. "I'll go!"

'Indeed, it is easy to control this young lad!'

Fang Yuan smiled and nodded his head. Slowly, he glanced at Qin Qing. "I'll have to control this girl..."

...

"Hold up, what are you doing?"

Needless to say, Qin Yun was not prepared for this. He did not do anything but only gave a suspicious look as he stood on the streets, which attracted the attention of a guard.

A group of guards came over and examined him. "You don't look like you're from here..."

"Cough cough... I am... I am..."

Qin Yun was too nervous to say anything. Facing a large group of guards, he was intimidated and started to stutter.

"Haha... Look at this foolish boy. He looks so well-to-do, but he is just an uneducated bloke!"

The leader among them started to laugh but gave off a suspicious feeling. With the wave of his hand, a guard took out a bronze mirror and aimed it at Qin Yun.

"Weng! Weng!"

A yellow glow was emitted from the mirror and landed on Qin Yun.

Qin Yun shuddered and felt that his breathing had stopped. His limbs were paralysed and he was unable to move a muscle.

On his shoulder where the identity imprint was, a sound was heard.

"Weng! Weng!"

The bronze mirror glittered and finally turned into a hue of green.

"There's no problem with his identity imprint. He should be a businessman from elsewhere who came here to trade. Hehe... Boy, the Ten Extremes is very dangerous. It's not a place for people like you!"

The leader of the guards revealed his yellow teeth and gently patted Qin Yun's cheek with the blade of his knife. Casually, he continued asking. "What's your identity number?

"Woooo! Woooo!"

At this point in time, a bugle was heard across the entire Ten Extremes.

"Tata! Tata!"

A group of cavalries galloped past the gate and along the streets.

"Riding a horse along the streets? What has happened that could be so serious?"

As the leader's expression changed, he diverted his attention away from the cowardly Qin Yun and gave his order. "Retreat, back to base! I'm afraid something big has happened!"

...

Looking at his silhouette from behind, Qin Yun finally came to his sense and started to breathe heavily.

"Not bad!"

Fang Yuan approached him and encouraged him with a calm voice.

"Since you managed to fool them, we can now try to go through the gate... Let's not waste time and be on our way now!"

"Wuuu!"

Qin Qing walked at the back. As she turned around, she could still see the chaos in the entire Ten Extremes and felt a little confused. 'Could it be... They have found out what happened in the desert plains?'

...

Fang Yuan and company made it through the gate.

The fire was still burning and a few square miles of the desert was charred.

Hundred of cavalries remained silent as they formed a circle.

"It's here! Officer Lin's last hint of spiritual aura was here!"

A soldier dressed in white exclaimed as he searched the area with a spiritual light.

"How would they dare to kill an officer of the Ten Extremes! When did the people of Nine Suns Sect have this ability?"

From the side, a general in black armour stood out.

He was tall, had eyes like a monkey and sideburns like a tiger. His face was squarish and he had large ears. With every step of his, it felt as though there was a mini earthquake.

"Bang!"

As the black-armoured general approached the center, he clenched his fist and punched the ground.

Soil and mud flew everywhere and everything that was left was a huge hole with the smell of a rotting corpse.

Fang Yuan was not that helpful and made sure that the Nine Suns Sect were the ones who would be responsible for his own doing.

All of their efforts to conceal the corpse were futile and it was discovered.

"Whoosh!"

Within the hole, a few shattered pieces of stone started to gather together under the influence of an invisible force and finally landed in the black-armoured general's hands, forming the shape of a bronze token.

"Lin Quannan's token is here. It seems like he has met with an unfortunate event..."

The general closed his eyes. "What a strong spiritual spell! Its foundations are wood-type and it is further complemented by wind and fire-types! When did the Nine Suns Sect have such a strong alliance?"

"Reporting!"

At this point in time, following the arrival of an eagle, a soldier knelt on one knee and reported loudly. "We have news that Nine Suns Sect have already traversed through the desert and have entered Three World Mountain. Should we continue to chase them?"

"There's no need to!"

The black-armoured general waved his hands. "Do you want to relive what they have experienced?"

The Illusionary World was too mysterious, and there were instances of even spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Realm dying there! Even the Ten Extremes would not be willing to risk, and from that day onwards, the Three World Mountain became a forbidden ground.

"Something feels... out of place!"

As the soldier in the white feather robe bent over, his face was filled with curiosity. "Although all signs point to the Nine Suns Sect as the culprit, these soldiers did not die at the hands of the Nine Suns Sect..."

"Could it be..."

The black-armoured general froze before slowly dusting his hands. "It is the bad luck of Officer Lin to have encountered a highly skilled person. This person could have come from the desert beyond the Three World Mountain! This is not good!"

His eyes glittered. Suddenly, he leapt onto his horse. "Immediately inform the city to keep their guards up. A fugitive might be making his way back to Da Qian!"

"And also, order all the cavalries to patrol the smaller routes!"

It was evident that this black-armoured general had enough experience. As he passed down his orders, he slowly set up a giant net to capture the fugitives.

Little did he know that Fang Yuan and company had already left the Ten Extremes and even bypassed the final gate. They had already entered Da Qian Empire!

Sand Region.

This was one of the regions among the 99 in Da Qian Empire and was situated at the North-west of the empire. The people here were brute. The region consisted of 6 counties, and Dongyi County was one of them.

In the county, there were many people. Within a sedan, the Qin Siblings looked out with tears welling up in their eyes.

"Finally... we're back!"

Qin Qing clenched her teeth as her eyes were filled with tears. "I will... take my revenge!"

Chapter 225: An Encounter

In Dongyi County, within the Qin Family Mansion.

Lady Xu had a gentle look and was clad in jade jewelry. She was a totally different woman compared to Lady Wang, the stepmother of Yang Fan.

However, in terms of their power and standing in the family, both of them were equally powerful and influential.

Lady Xu closed her eyes as she recited a mantra. The servants and housekeepers around her remained silent and were all afraid to let out a sound.

Since the death of her son, Lady Xu had cried many times. From then on, she was devastated and all she did every day was to recite her mantra and pray for the soul of her late son. No one else outside the family knew what happened.

However, in reality, only the few servants closer to Lady Xu would know that she was aware of the movement of every other wife in the family.

After an hour, the entire *<Past Life Mantra>* was recited to completion.

Lady Xu stood up. Her face was filled with sorrow and compassion, which was an expression only possible after finishing the mantra.

"Master has been eating lesser and lesser these days and has started to sleep later and later. The Frog Roe and Lotus Chicken are ready in the kitchen. Qinghe! Serve it to Master!"

"Yes My Lady!"

A servant acknowledged and dismissed herself.

"Also... Take care of the few young master and mistress under me. Send someone to check on them every day and replenish

anything that they might need..."

"Yes, My Lady! My Lady, you are indeed caring!"

A housekeeper bowed and left.

As he walked out of the door, the housekeeper stroked his beard. "The death of old master and her few sons meant that she had to decide on an heir. Since she is not willing to let Qin Yun and her sister be the heir, she could only choose among the children from the other wives and establish good relations with them!"

"Whoosh!"

At this point in time, a man in black flashed past, bringing with him a gush of wind, which made the housekeeper shudder.

'This person...'

As he shuddered, he recalled that Lady Xu had many untold secrets. With this, he kept his head low and acted as though he didn't see anything.

"Greetings, My Lady!"

As the man in black saw Lady Xu, he knelt down on one knee and appeared solemn.

The compassionate-looking Lady Xu slowly put her mantra scroll down and waved to the servants, dismissing them. "How are my master and mistress?"

Keeping her head down, she spoke. There was a chill vibe from her gentle voice.

"Qin Qing and Qin Yun are untraceable. We are suspecting that they have already passed Three World Mountain, but our spies in the Ten Extremes have yet to receive any news about them..."

The spy was from the Qin Family too. He seemed to be helping the Qin Siblings but in reality, he was the killer move arranged by Lady Xu.

If the siblings were to contact him, he would immediately betray them and activate the guards in the Ten Extremes to take them down as fugitives. This move would wipe them out once and for all.

But now, how could there be no news?

"One Elder Zhou would not be enough to protect them from the dangers in Three World Mountain. All of them could have died... or perhaps, the Qin Siblings have already settled down in the plains and are no longer interested in returning to Da Qian..."

The man in black too a guess.

"That's not alright. I am still not sure about this!"

Lady Xu shook her head as she toyed around with her meditation beads.

"The 15th of this month would be the gathering of the Qin Family. I intend to let Qin Lei be the heir... By then, as long as we get the approval from Old Master, we'll record it down in the family books. There should be no issue about this. Even if Qin Yun and his sister were to come by then, they would not be able to do anything!"

"That is a good move, My Lady! Do you have any instructions for me?"

The man in black asked, still kneeling down.

"Return home and invite Grandmaster Xu!"

Lady Xu gritted her teeth and her face was filled with determination. "It is unfilial of me to have to trouble Grandmaster Xu. However, after this, when I have control over the family, I would reward you greatly!"

Grandmaster Xu was a spiritual array master and was highly skilled in his profession.

"Yes My Lady!"

The man in black had a bad feeling about this.

"Very well. By then, I will need you to do this..."

Lady Xu lowered her voice and whispered.

"Yes My Lady!"

The man in black shuddered and his eyes were filled with a burning passion. This was an ultimatum.

...

"The 15th of this month would be the gathering of the Qin Family. Every time an heir is chosen, if the records would have to be re-written, they must be a ceremony. Members of the family would get to recommend the next heir, at least officially..."

In a secluded inn in Dongyi County, Qin Qing lowered the window shades as she described to Qin Yun and Fang Yuan.

"Brother Qin Yun ranks in front and has the purest blood of them all! His appearance would be able to change everything!"

Qin Qing exclaimed with confidence.

"Purity of blood?!"

Fang Yuan was skeptical. "You are intending to change everything just because his blood is purer?"

He couldn't feel any power or influence from Qin Yun.

"Wait up. Come here!"

As he called Qin Yun over, Fang Yuan used his nails to scratch in Qin Yun's arm, opening a red wound.

As the blood flowed out, it condensed into a bubble in mid-air.

"Whoosh!"

As Fang Yuan executed his technique, a silver mirror appeared. The bubble of blood slowly crept up the mirror before exploding. The thick red blood swirled about, and in it, there were hints of

gold.

"Eh? There's a little power in here... However, the power in his blood is not from your family!"

Fang Yuan was shocked.

"It seems that Sir, you are aware of it!"

Qin Qing chuckled. "The power of the people in Qin Family is not from our own people! To think about it, it is more closely related to dream masters!"

At this point, she raised her chest like a proud cockerel.

"Oh? Tell me more!"

Fang Yuan forced a look of interest.

"Sir, you may be unaware, but there are many valuable and mysterious beasts in Da Qian Empire. They do not originate from our world, and the beasts native to Da Qian are incapable of harnessing the power from blood."

Qin Qing continued. "However, a dream master is able to communicate with other worlds and create objects out of nothing. They can create a whole new species!"

"The Yang Xuan blood in our Qin Family originates from a dream master and has been passed down from a long time ago. Although little, this blood would give us fire-resistant properties and would also accelerate our cultivation if it is fire-type."

"Dream master..."

As soon as Fang Yuan heard it, his eyes glittered. "The Qin Family is related to dream masters?"

"I am not sure about this."

Qin Qing shook her head. "Dream masters live for a long time, and this is especially so for those who are able to gather energy from heaven and earth and absorb essence from living things.

They can live for a very long period of time and it would even be possible for them to be surviving until today. However, I am unsure of his relationship with the Qin Family."

'It seems that the status of dream masters in Da Qian is beyond my expectations...'

As he thought about it himself, Fang Yuan changed the topic. "It is not enough for Qin Yun to become heir just because his blood is purer. The crucial thing will be the Xu Family's involvement in this, and the few stubborn elders in the Qin Family. I can help you 'convince' them, but what can you offer me?"

"Everything!"

Qin Qing clenched her teeth and pulled Qin Yun along to kneel down. "Since you are a spiritual knight, you must have some technique to take ownership of other people's soul. As long as we succeed, after Qin Yun has become the rightful heir, I would be willing to sacrifice my soul to you and be your slave for eternity. Other than that, the Qin Family would be willing to accede to any of your requests!"

"Sister..."

Qin Yun was shocked at the conditions she laid out. His eyes popped out and he did not dare to say another word.

"That's not enough!"

Fang Yuan shook his head. "If you throw in your brother's soul for me to control, then only we have room for discussion."

"Impossible!"

Qin Qing suddenly rejected him. "My brother is about to become the master of the Qin Family. If anything weird happens to him, don't you think the elders in the family would find out?"

"That is why I don't want his soul. I only want something that would allow me to control him."

Fang Yuan replied with a straight face.

"Alright, I'll agree!"

Qin Yun bit his teeth and agreed.

"What are you doing?"

Qin Qing was infuriated.

"I am the master of the family, and I'll have the final say!"

Qin Yun had an expression of determination never seen before. "Sister, you have always been the one sacrificing for us. Now, it is my turn to do so."

'I am only offering to help them take revenge. Why does it sound like I am taking their lives!'

Fang Yuan was unable to stand their squabbling and left the room. He started to roam the streets casually.

As the capital of the county, the county city was extremely lively. It was much more prosperous than his own Secluded Country.

'To think about it, I am still unfamiliar with the powerful people in Da Qian Empire and even more so for the information regarding dream masters...'

Fang Yuan subconsciously recalled Qing Gui, the dream master which appeared the previous time he accessed Yang Fan's dream.

He seemed like the leader among the evil dream masters, and it was as though he had a huge sect under him.

Of course, in reality, Fang Yuan did not become a dream master. He destroyed one of Qing Gui's incarnations.

On the contrary, Yang Fan was likely to have been taken in by Qing Gui as his disciple. He could have even cut all ties with his family and destroyed the entire Yang Family.

Afterward, Yang Fan became highly skilled, but no one knew if he had taken in disciples.

"The qualifications to become a dream master is too high. I'm afraid that it is a rare profession even in Da Qian Empire and is not common..."

Fang Yuan entered a tea house and ordered a few snacks.

Not long after, the dishes were served and the fragrance filled the entire room. The tea was spiritual tea and the snacks were creatively made from spiritual ingredients.

"Eh?"

At this point in time, a caravan slowly entered the city. Among the caravan was a horse carriage. As a pair of white hands peeled open the curtains, a glittery pair of eyes were revealed as it scanned around.

As their eyes met, both of them were in shock.

"This feeling... Dream master!"

Fang Yuan sipped a mouthful of spiritual tea. "What a coincidence? Could this dream master be arriving for the Qin Family gathering? If that is so, it seems like they indeed have relations with the dream masters in Da Qian..."

...

"Young mistress?"

In front of the carriage, an old man enquired, confused.

He had big hands that were extremely steady, and he was a Wu Zong. However, he was treating this lady as though she was a god.

"Nothing much. Let's go!"

A gentle voice was heard from the carriage.

As the carriage continued along its way, the person in the carriage was confused as well. "Dream master? Could he be an ally of the Qin Family? Who would've thought that such a boring mission would have such an unexpected finding!"

Chapter 226: Ambush

In Dongyi County, on a secluded mountain path, a caravan continued its way.

The caravan was luxurious. All the riders were riding white horses and were clad in white robes. They were all looking energetic.

If this was in the wild, such a luxurious caravan would be a prime target for all the mountain thieves and robbers.

However, their journey was peaceful.

They owed the peace to the little flag above the carriage. The flag had the print of three small clouds.

Any thieves with exposure would know that this was the flag for the Xu Family, the symbol of power!

Although the Xu Family was not the top three families in Dongyi County, it had to surely be in the top ten. The family was led by a spiritual array master who had many connections.

Of course, the most important fact was that the eldest daughter of the Xu Family was married to the Qin Family, and was the first lady of the Qin Family!

Because of this, even the families who rank in front of the Xu Family would still have to respect them.

"Haha... I thought that the journey would be dangerous. Now, it looks like a harmless field trip..."

On a white horse, a young man clad in silk robes smiled with pride.

His face was pale and his eye sockets were deep. He had eye circles, and it was evident that he had abused alcohol and had frequented brothels, which harmed his body.

"Eh... Third Brother, this is an emergency! Otherwise, Aunt

would surely not have to trouble our Grandmaster to help out!"

A young man beside him who was slightly older continued. "However, as long as our Grandmaster is personally seeing to this, those people will not be able to cause trouble! The Qin Family is ultimately ours!"

"You're right, First Master!"

The others agreed.

Under the wings of protection from the spiritual array master, the Xu Family have never encountered any true danger. This proud and self-entitled mindset of theirs was not something that could be changed overnight.

Looking at one of the carriages, Third Brother felt relieved.

In the Xu Family, the Grandmaster has always been the pillar of support.

"Since our Grandmaster, the Xu Family have already taken control of a district within 10 years. We are among the top ten families in the county. If we are successful in taking over the Qin Family, we can become the most powerful family in Dongyi County. Even the Sand Region can no longer have any control over us!"

As he looked into the setting sun, his heart was filled with pride.

Suddenly, as the Third Brother squinted his eyes, he could see a black dot on the peak of the mountain east of them.

The black dot soon disappeared from the peak of the mountain as though it had jumped down. Quickly, it rushed towards them and became a silhouette. In a moment, flames broke out.

"It's an ambush!"

Against the 9 fiery dragons, the Third Master could only shout. In an instant, he was in flames.

"Roar!"

As the fiery dragons roared, they spit out burning flames which swept across the entire caravan before leaping towards the carriage in the middle.

"Hmph! What audacity!"

Within the carriage, a weak voice was heard and with it the feeling of helplessness.

"Mountains, rise!"

In the carriage, spiritual inscriptions glittered and quickly exploded, transforming into a small array. The array covered the disciples of the Xu Family and protected them.

"A spiritual array from the carriage? Haha... Wind Dragon, come out!"

The black figure laughed, and another 9 green dragons appeared, which slowly combined with the fiery dragons.

The flames would become stronger in the wind!

In a moment, the spiritual array which was cast abruptly was destroyed. Many disciples and elders of the Xu Family... were dead before they knew it. They became dried corpses or even worse, left without a corpse.

"Whoosh!"

The carriage broke apart, revealing an old figure with grey hair. The old person appeared lost.

"Whoosh!"

Amidst the wind and fiery dragons, a figure of a person appeared as though a god had descended onto earth. As he leapt out, he struck a fist.

"Rumble!"

Behind him, three spiritual meridians condensed and the fist landed on the old person at full strength.

"Chi!"

A spiritual inscription on the old person's clothing glittered, forming a translucent armour which was extremely strong. However, the old person still shook after receiving the punch, and his face turned red. He spat out a small mouthful of blood and quickly retreated. "You are... A Wu Zong at the Meridian Opening Stage! Why would such a highly skilled person like you ambush without a sound and assassinate an old man like me?"

"You have blocked the way of too many people!"

It was Fang Yuan.

After convincing the Qin Siblings to put some form of control over them, he had to help them to the best of his abilities to push them to the position of power.

Although the decision of who would be the heir would only be made at the Qin Family gathering, he would not wait until then to take down his enemy.

It would only be logical to take down those that would oppose you before the decision-making day!

Elder Xu was the biggest threat to him.

Firstly, he was the strongest supporter of Lady Xu and would surely stick by her no matter what.

Secondly, if a spiritual array master was given time to prepare, he would be able to capture everyone who would go for the Qin Family gathering! Even Fang Yuan would not want to pit himself against a spiritual array master within his meticulously-planned array.

Therefore, this was the best chance!

It was a golden opportunity for a spiritual array master to walk out of his highly protected nest.

Right now, without time given for him to prepare, he could only

use the magical weapons which he brought along to defend himself. This was the best chance for the Meridian Opening Wu Zong to strike!

"Giant Eagle Metal Body!"

"First Refining Stage Golden Body!"

As Fang Yuan exclaimed, a golden glow appeared around his body. With the Sixth Elemental Strength, he was like a destructive dragon to the survivors of the Xu Family.

"Don't harm our Grandmaster!"

Seeing how he could tear apart the Grandmaster's defence like cotton, one of the members of the Xu Family exclaimed and rushed to the back of Fang Yuan, striking him with his fists.

"Weng!"

As the fist landed on Fang Yuan's back, a loud sound akin to a gong was heard.

"Ants, scram and get lost!"

As he casually flicked his hands, the Wu Zong behind him was in shock and flew back uncontrollably. He suffered many fractures in his ribs and his blood spurted across the air as he flew. His internal organs and bones became a bloodied mess.

"Are you... sent by the Qin Siblings?"

Seeing Fang Yuan unharmed with the protection of the spiritual armour, Elder Xu retreated continuously as though he was truly afraid.

If he was given time to prepare, he would not be afraid of even a Wu Zong in the Elemental Opening Realm.

However, the only thing he was lacking now was time!

He was quickly overcome in a matter of seconds!

In front of a Wu Zong who ambushed him, his weakness was

revealed!

"I can give you 2 times of what they offered! No... Three times!"

With another fist, Elder Xu spat out another mouthful of blood. As his last defensive equipment was destroyed, he crawled on the floor with embarrassment. With all his strength, he continued to exclaim. "I help others cast spiritual arrays and I have loads of wealth and connections. Let me go and you will gain my friendship and valuable treasures. Compared to all I have, what can the Qin Siblings offer you?"

"You can never match up to what they can offer me..."

Fang Yuan went up and sighed. "They can give me the entire Qin Family. Can you?"

"The entire Qin Family? You..."

As his pupils contracted, Elder Xu could see a white finger approaching him.

This finger was white and long, as though it was carved from the finest white jade. It was perfect-looking, but now, it was reaching towards his forehead!

"Chi!"

As Elder Xu's head exploded, his Zu Qiao was shattered as he fell straight to the ground without a breath.

This influential and powerful spiritual array master could do nothing to defend himself under an ambush and had now become a corpse.

"Eh? He didn't even resist!"

As his spiritual will trembled, Fang Yuan took a few steps backwards and casually picked up a disciple of the Xu Family and threw him forward.

"Ah!"

The disciple let out a cry and was struck by a dark glow which emitted from Elder Xu. The skin on his forehead was peeled off, revealing a black coloured ghost face which seemed to have a life of its own.

Sweeping him with his spiritual will, the black ghost recorded everything from his mind and appeared enraged.

"Chi!"

It was extremely quick. In a matter of seconds, it disappeared completely, and it took a while before Fang Yuan knew what had just happened.

"The imprint of death? This should be the doing of an even stronger spiritual knight. This spiritual knight must have made is such that the print would be activated upon the death of Elder Xu and it would target the closest living person..."

If he were to be imprinted with the imprint, it would be an enemy that wouldn't rest until his death.

Fortunately, Fang Yuan was a Wu Zong and also a dream master. He was adept with distractions and illusionary spells. In that instant, he could detect that something was wrong and could quickly find a scapegoat to take his place. With a little spiritual technique, he had resulted in the imprint landing on the Xu Family's own disciple.

"Kacha!"

After confirming, Fang Yuan casually broke the unfortunate scapegoat's neck and started to sweep the area to kill off any survivors and loot from them.

The most important was, of course, Elder Xu, since he was wealthy. The next would be the hidden Wu Zong in the Xu Family.

'However... that black ghost face seems familiar...'

After thinking for a while, the image of Qing Gui's face appeared

in Fang Yuan's mind.

'Venerable Qing Gui? No! It doesn't seem so, but it seems likely that these two ghosts are related. Could both of these originate from evil dream masters?'

After looting all of them, Fang Yuan burnt down the entire area.

"The Xu Family's reinforcements are settled. Next up would be to clean up the Qin Family!"

...

The 13th day and the weather in Dongyi County was cooling.

The atmosphere in the Qin Family's mansion was a weird one.

Everyone was rushing here and there to finish the final preparations for the gathering.

In the backyard, the atmosphere was tense.

"It has been a while and Grandmaster is not here yet. I am worried!"

Lady Xu held the meditation beads in her hands and looked down. "Xu Fu, wait at the city gates. If they are not here by noon, follow the path which they would take and find them!"

"Yes My Lady!"

Xu Fu was the man the black. This time, he had no more hesitation and agreed loudly.

"Reporting! My Lady, bad news!"

At this point in time, a housekeeper ran over frantically. He clumsily tripped over the doorstep and broke his front tooth as his mouth started to bleed. It was a funny sight to behold, but his message seemed extremely important. "There are traces of a fight between spiritual knights outside the city. After an investigation, it is confirmed to be the Xu Family's caravan! I'm afraid... it's a bad thing!"

"What?"

Lady Xu stood up and her mind went black, as she struggled to maintain her balance.

Chapter 227: Meng Lian

It was nightfall.

Fang Yuan dressed in black and snuck into Qin Family's mansion.

As the most powerful family in Dongyi County, the defence of the Qin Family's mansion was rather strong. In fact, they even had a protective array over their mansion. It was rumoured that the array was part of Heaven's Five Element Array and even spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Realm would be trapped for a moment.

Unfortunately for them, they could guard against outsiders but not their own people.

Although this miniature Heaven's Five Element Array was not cast by Elder Xu, the Qin Family and once invited him to repair and maintain the array.

And for unknown reasons, Elder Xu had left a loophole in the array and had remembered it in his mind.

Therefore, the capture of the Xu Family had benefited Fang Yuan.

"Who would guess that the Qin Family would have something like this..."

After entering the Qin Family, the thing which Fang Yuan feared most was the danger that he could sense from the main hall.

"Not lone people, but a whole group of them! Are these their private soldiers?"

Every heir would have control over 500 of these soldiers.

From the looks of it, these private soldiers were not normal troops, but spiritual troops! Dao troops! If combined into a military formation, it could be comparable to a spiritual knight in the Elemental Opening Realm!

"Needless to say, these type of families would pass down secret techniques. As long as one of them would be chosen to be the heir, they would sacrifice everything that they have got to train a newbie into a Wu Zong or spiritual knight!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and felt a little fearful.

In Da Qian Empire, every family in every county would have such strong foundations and resources.

Even when Lady Xu wanted to take over Qin Family, she had to do it subtly, for even she herself had to fear the power in the family.

"No wonder they had to compare the purity of their blood..."

Fang Yuan looked at the patriarchal hall and turned around.

His target was not the people of high status in the family.

The First Lady's of the Qin Family.

Outside a luxurious hall, the atmosphere was sorrowful and there were crying sounds heard.

As soon as they had received the bad news, Lady Xu had collapsed and then everyone was on their toes.

Fang Yuan's motive for coming here was not to console her, but to kill her!

"I myself am enough to plot against the Qin Family!"

He gracefully leapt into the garden in the backyard of the mansion and revealed a mysterious look. "No matter what this Lady Xu had planned, as long as she is dead, who would be against Qin Yun in becoming the heir?"

"Bewildering fog!"

Although there were a few strong spiritual auras around the Qin Family mansion, Fang Yuan did not care less. With big steps, he walked into the mansion as his bewildering fog spread.

"Clang!"

Within the room, the sound of porcelain cups breaking was distinct.

"My Lady! I can give up my life, but you must take care of your body!"

Xu Fu looked at the spiritual medicine which was spilt all over the floor and was expressionless. Blood trickled down his head but he did not flinch a single bit as he exclaimed.

"Eh..."

The gentle voice of Lady Xu was heard, as she choked on her own words. "My poor Grandmaster, as well as my father and brothers..."

She had already cried her fair share. Wiping her tears, she revealed a look of determination. "Do you know who is the killer?"

"We have no idea. It should be someone they encountered on the way, and that person is at the Meridian Opening Stage!"

Outsiders would have no idea, but how would the both of them no know?

A spiritual array master with the protection of a hidden Wu Zong! For an ambush to be successful, the person had to at least be of Meridian Opening Stage, or must have had help from other spiritual knights!

"The Qin Siblings!"

Lady Xu remarked with hatred.

She had always been an amiable person and would not have stepped on the toes of others. It was rather obvious if she carefully thought of the people who would be against the Xu Family.

Although it was unbelievable, it had to be the truth!

"Who would've thought that those two bast*rds would be able to

turn things around and get such a strong reinforcement!"

Lady Xu continued angrily. "Tomorrow, I will look for Old Master and the few elders! I'll let them make the decision!"

After the downfall of Xu Family, this women knew who she had to rely on!

After all, she was the eldest daughter-in-law of the Qin Family. As long as she made herself look pitiful in front of the few elders to make them angry, she would be able to convince the Qin Family to send people out to take down the mysterious highly skilled person.

After all, she had spent quite a lot of effort in trying to appease the few elders for the past 10 years.

Even if the Qin Siblings were to return, she had confidence that it would still go her way!

"Not bad! Not bad indeed!"

As the door opened, Fang Yuan walked in.

As the bewildering fog dissipated, the servants and housekeepers fell, unconscious.

"Who's there?"

Xu Fu stood up, all tensed up.

"The one who is here to kill you!"

With a casual palm, his spiritual meridian slithered around. All Xu Fu could feel was an immense pressure on his chest.

As he shrieked, blood started to flow from his mouth and nose, and the bones in his body shattered into a million pieces. However, there was not too much sound and he fell down like a snake without bones.

"Cough cough..."

On the bed, an old Lady Xu coughed a few times as soon as she saw Fang Yuan.

"Wu Zong at the level of Meridian Opening Stage.... and this spiritual technique..."

Her eyes were quickly filled with hatred. "Did you ambush the Xu Family carriage?"

"That's right! Not just that, but I am going to kill you tonight as well!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and admitted to his doings.

"What did the Qin Siblings offer you?"

Lady Xu asked, her voice filled with hatred.

"You don't have to know this, because... you are already a dead person!"

Fang Yuan slowly walked towards her and raised his right hand.

"You... cough cough... cough cough..."

As Lady Xu coughed continuously, her chest turned red and the hatred in her eyes slowly increased in intensity.

As Fang Yuan's finger was about to reach Lady Xu's forehead, he suddenly stopped and looked towards the door. "It's you!"

"It's me! Hehe..... We have affinity! Who would've thought that we would meet again today!"

At the side of the room, a servant who was unconscious suddenly stood up and laughed.

Previously, the servant looked decent but was not the most beautiful.

However, now, no one would be able to associate her with the servant which she disguised as.

In Fang Yuan's eyes, suddenly, a pretty lady appeared.

Her eyes were beautiful and she had a solemn look. It was as though she had descended from the heavens and gave off the feeling like a lotus flower blooming in the mud.

Even Lady Xu would feel ashamed when compared to her.

"It's you, lady!"

Fang Yuan could recognise that this lady was the dream master which he had met that day.

To be unaffected by the bewildering fog, she must have gone through a dream master's training. However, it was exceptional that she could deceive Fang Yuan and camouflage among the servants.

"I still do not know your name!"

Seeing an actual dream master from Da Qian Empire, Fang Yuan felt excited.

"I am Meng Lian!"

Meng Lian bit her lips. "What about you?"

Although there was danger everywhere in the Qin Family's mansion, the lady appeared calm as though she was the owner of the mansion.

"I am Fang Yuan! Meng Lian, are you here for Lady Xu? If that is so, I'll gladly give her to you!"

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders.

To him, it was not the most important priority for him to take over Qin Family.

Since this lady was a dream master, she must have had a master. She could have strong backing, and it was unwise to make enemies.

"...Lady, save me!"

It was as though Lady Xu was holding on to her lifeline. Climbing down from the bed, she tugged at Meng Lian's dress. "Lady, if you save me, I will reward you with everything that I have and I will obey your every order..."

"Bang!"

Suddenly, she appeared helpless and fell to the ground.

"Hehe... This is just a mission. How can it be compared to you, young master?"

Meng Lian smiled cunningly. "Let this woman be my gift to you, how does that sound?"

Fang Yuan continued smiling but was shocked inside.

Although Meng Lian was talking to him cheerfully, her actions reflected how lightly she would take a human life.

Or in other words, in her eyes, only dream masters were 'human' like her!

'Such confidence...'

Fang Yuan sighed in his mind.

A dream master in the Illusionary Divine stage was indeed powerful.

At higher stages, these dream masters would be able to make objects or even an entire heritage of humans.

Needless to say, there would be many paths of Illusionary Divine Stage and every path was extremely strong, to the point that these dream masters would rarely have any friends.

With all these powers, it was only natural for them to feel confident.

To see oneself as a god and creator, it would only be normal to see normal humans as ants.

Even a lady like this had such a power. What would be the power of all the evil dream masters in the entire Da Qian Empire?

After thinking to himself, Fang Yuan asked directly. "You must have a request since you are offering a gift! What would you need to help you with?"

"Great! Master Fang, you're straight to the point!"

Meng Lian revealed a joyful look. "You look unfamiliar and must be a new dream master. Have you joined the 'Dream Realm'?"

"Dream Realm?"

Fang Yuan's heart skipped a beat, but his expression remained unchanged. "Nope!"

"Would you allow me to bring you then... to be honest, I would contribute much more by bringing a new member back compared to these small missions!"

Meng Lian was jubilant as she exclaimed.

Both of them were dream masters and could feel each other's intent. After a while, they became more direct.

"Contribution?"

Fang Yuan asked, curious.

"Have you not heard of dream realm? Oh my, have your master not told you anything about it?"

This time, it was Meng Lian who covered her mouth in disbelief.

"This... To be honest, I was fortunate enough to encounter a dream master's inheritance, that's all!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his nose. He was speaking the truth, but he did not reveal where the inheritance was. Therefore, this was not considered lying and Meng Lian would not be able to see though Fang Yuan.

Chapter 228: Dream Realm

"Ah, I see!"

Meng Lian examined Fang Yuan as her eyes glittered. "What a gifted person to be able to find your own way to become a dream master!"

"Perhaps!"

Fang Yuan's expression did not change, but inside, he was laughing.

Even though Meng Lian was a dream master like himself, she should be stuck at the dream-building stage, comparable to a spiritual knight at the peak of elemental gathering realm. Since she had not achieved a breakthrough to the elemental opening realm, she was unaware of her own hidden potential.

After realising this, his interest towards Meng Lian and the Dream Realm grew.

"Who's that?"

"What audacity! How dare you trespass the Qin Family's mansion!"

With such a huge commotion in the room and the fact that both Fang Yuan and Meng Lian did not bother to hide, they were quickly discovered.

He could detect the fury in all of them.

As they found out the death of Lady Xu, they were even more infuriated.

"Kill!"

Around the patriarchal hall, people started to appear. They were well-built and started to surround them. All of them were clad in armour, and they were wielding bows with spiritual inscriptions on them.

It was illegal in Da Qian Empire to own more than three pieces of armour for each family, except for officials and those under special circumstances. Otherwise, they would be treated as rebels!

As for the bows with spiritual inscriptions, needless to say, it was the death sentence to just own one of them!

However, with the power and influence of the Qin Family, they could have a 500-soldier strong private army, which made everything they did seem legal.

"What an array!"

"Whoosh!"

As their shadows flashed, Fang Yuan and Meng Lian leapt onto the roof as they witnessed the scene in silence.

"All these soldiers have cultivated a special technique for them to fuse their inner force together. Furthermore, this formation seems to have its uniqueness..."

Seeing the soldiers forming up in their array and detecting their spiritual auras, Fang Yuan complimented them, as all of them complemented the formation perfectly.

"This is the Qin Family's 'Fiery Feathers Array'! These 500-odd soldiers have the blood of the Qin Family too! Using the array's power, they might even be able to summon the rumoured Fiery Bird's incarnation!"

Meng Lian rolled her eyes at Fang Yuan before explaining.

"Who's that? Who dares to come to my family to kill?"

A thunderous roar was heard and a few extremely strong spiritual auras were detected approaching the room. A few old people with white hair appeared. They were the elders of the Qin Family.

The elder in front turned red like a burning volcano.

"It's me!"

Meng Lian chuckled. "I don't like her, therefore I killed her. What can you do about it?"

"You..."

The few elders of the Qin Family were enraged, but the elder in front remained calm. Looking at Meng Lian, he was rather confused. "You are..."

"Good foresight, old man!"

Meng Lian smiled and took out a token.

Fang Yuan took a quick glance at the token. It seemed to be made of both gold and jade and there were wooden carvings on it. In the middle, there was a blooming white lotus.

"You are a... Divine Lady!!!"

The elder heaved a huge sigh and the rest of them changed their expressions.

"So... Do you want to capture me?"

Meng Lian smiled innocently and walked out of the mansion.

All of the elders of the Qin Family clenched their teeth. Even though they were all powerful and had spiritual troops and spiritual arrays to help them, they did not dare to lay a single finger on her. They could only look at her take her leave, but none of them knew the significance of the white lotus and how it managed to strike fear in all of them.

With all that she had done, Fang Yuan remained silent and followed behind Meng Lian, feeling proud of what she had done.

...

"Is she really... that Divine Lady?"

Only when Meng Lian and Fang Yuan were out of sight did an elder enquired, his voice full of fear.

"If it's not her, then who would it be?"

The master elder smiled sheepishly. "Although we are the strongest family in Dongyi County, we are nothing compared to that. Why would that Divine Lady find trouble with the First Wife?"

After a long silence, everyone began to think about the fight for the heir.

However, even the master elder, who was closest to Lady Xu, had nothing to say.

"Eh... Since the death of Qin Jie and Qin Fengyu, the Qin Family had been a mess..."

The master elder sighed loudly. "We should quickly decide on the next family head to stabilise the Qin Family. Otherwise, if we always have to come out to settle disputes, we would die earlier... Where is our grandson Qin Yun?"

He had no other intentions as he spoke, but the few other elders already knew his plans.

'He... should be able to arrive before the ceremony!'

One of the elders was pleased. Finally, his efforts had not gone to waste, and he was beginning to reap the rewards.

'However... Is a dream master really that powerful, to the extent that a simple thought from them would be able to change brother's intentions?'

The other elders were skeptical. "... could it be to push him to become family head so that they can scrutinise him?"

The Qin Siblings were the ones most suspicious to be responsible for everything that happened today.

By supporting Qin Yun to become the family head, they would establish good relations with him and can also test him out. If Fang Yuan were to find out about their thoughts, he would die of laughter...

...

"Where is the Dream Realm?"

Fang Yuan followed Meng Lian as they arrived at the outskirts of Dongyi County. He had a confused look on his face.

"What is the impression of the Dream Realm in your mind, Fang Yuan? What is our world?"

Looking at the surroundings, it was a piece of wilderness with no life in sight. Meng Lian suddenly asked Fang Yuan.

"The reality is an illusion, and illusionary things are real! Our dream worlds are like a bubble that can be destroyed and rebuilt in an instant. This is also true for your world..."

Fang Yuan replied in a serious tone.

"Why would you have such a deep impression of dream worlds and our world?"

Meng Lian felt a little suspicious and continued explaining. "Where do you think... the Dream Realm would be? Of course, in our dreams!"

"Dreams? Entering the dream of another dream master?"

Fang Yuan suddenly felt inspired.

"That's right! By dream-accessing, every dream master would be brought to a common dream world, the Dream Realm. The Dream Realm is a large-scale public trading place!"

From Meng Lian's description, Fang Yuan's expression changed. "Dream masters from all over the world can connect together in an instant through dream accessing and even do trading... It's unbelievable!"

In his past life, this would be known as the internet which connects the world. However, dream masters were able to actualise it out and even use it for trading purposes.

'All dream masters would specialise in different professions, but all of them can come together in the Dream Realm...'

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered; he could not wait to experience it for himself.

"Master, have you finally realised that I am not out to harm you?"

Meng Lian smiled cheekily.

"What is this Dream Realm built on?"

As he frowned, he thought of a question.

"Have you heard of a wild animal called 'Kun'?"

"Kun!?"

Thinking about it, Fang Yuan exclaimed. "Is it the one in the legends? The thousand-year-long dream of the beast which is illusionary? The one that normal people are unaware of?"

"That's right! This wild animal 'Kun' is a mutant. Our ancestors, the dream masters in Da Qian, have put in a lot of effort to catch one of it, keeping it in captivity and using it as the foundation of the dream world!"

Meng Lian took out a glittering scale the size of a palm. "This object has the spiritual aura of the Kun. As long as you are a dream master, you can use your dream-accessing technique to enter that dream world!"

"Many thanks!"

Fang Yuan received the scale over. Indeed, he could feel an illusionary spiritual aura from it.

"Let's go... Since this is your first time, I will have to verify your identity. Once you have been there before, you would not need this piece of scale and can access the dream world anytime and anywhere!"

Meng Lian brought him to a cave in the mountains, hugged her

knees and fell asleep next to a piece of green rock. She had entered her dream.

"Dream accessing!"

Scanning the surroundings to ensure that it was safe, Fang Yuan closed his eyes as well.

Of course, he would still guard against this lady.

However, ever since he had achieved a breakthrough to Illusionary Divine Stage, his magic proficiency points gained an exponential increase, which led to a new technique. This new technique allowed him to keep a tinge of consciousness in his body even after dream accessing. Therefore, if there was any danger, he could immediately wake up.

Since Meng Lian invited him, he would not decline and therefore executed his dream-accessing technique as well.

'Roar roar!'

As he traced the spiritual aura on the scale, his consciousness rosed and he could see a river of colourful bubbles.

Suddenly, a loud roar was heard and the bubbles burst.

As he focused, he drove away all the fog, revealing a big animal.

It was the size of an island and was sky-green in colour. Its body was covered in scales and had 8 legs, 6 eyes, 4 ears, and its limbs resembled a spider. It was flat on its back and felt mysterious and unnatural at the same time.

"The ancient wild animal - Kun!"

Fang Yuan focused.

He realised that although the gigantic animal's spiritual aura was scary, it was like a pool of still water and had no intention of fighting. It was covered in seals all around its body, and there was a dream world within it.

Although the dream world was huge, it was easy to infiltrate. Any dream master would be able to enter it at will.

"Indeed a public place!"

At the side, a few streaks of light broke the surface of the dream world and penetrated through. Seeing this, Fang Yuan began to rush straight into the dream world without any more hesitation.

"Pu!"

At the corner of the street, a shadow flashed by and Fang Yuan's body appeared.

"You're here?"

At the side, Meng Lian's voice was heard. "I have been waiting for quite a while..."

Turning around, Fang Yuan could see Meng Lian smiling cheekily there. He was shocked. "How can your body be so real..."

Half of her body was covered in a layer of fog, and in the fog, there were white lotuses blooming. Everything was fleeting.

Fang Yuan was stunned. Quickly, a thin layer of white fog appeared around him too.

"You learn fast!"

Meng Lian praised him. "Firstly, welcome to the Dream Realm. As a new member, you are entitled to an identity inscription plate. You will have to use it to accept missions and rewards!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head, and a jade inscription plate appeared in front of him.

"It's done!"

Meng Lian clapped her hands and smiled. "The mission to bring in a new member is complete! Realm Spirit, my reward!"

"Whoosh!"

On her hands appeared a jade inscription plate which was similar

to Fang Yuan's. However, there were a few golden words written on it, which made it look mysterious.

Chapter 229: Explore

"What is the Realm Spirit?"

"It used to be the consciousness of the Kun, but it has since been altered by dream masters to become the manager of the Dream Realm. It is neutral!"

Meng Lian cheekily answered. It was evident that she was happy as she had just given a huge contribution.

'Semi-automated manager?'

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes. "What kind of world is this?'

"Contribution points are the currency of the Dream Realm. You can use it to buy stuff, techniques, information or even hire highly-skilled dream masters to help you do stuff. Every contribution point is hard-earned. Therefore, you must value it as much as how you value your own eyes!"

Meng Lian reminded him.

"Thank you for the reminder!"

Fang Yuan held his fists together.

"At the end of this street is the marketplace for missions. All dream masters would put up missions that they need help with and you can take a look there."

"Also, in the Dream Realm, the powerful would set up their own bases and have a certain amount of authority. You are a clever man and surely would know the consequence of angering them, right?"

Meng Lian blinked. "Although the Dream Realm is a peaceful place, Da Qian is not. If you do not want to be taken advantage of as a newcomer, it is best to work with someone powerful... The organisation I am working for is quite influential. If you are considering, please remember to tell me."

"Of course!"

Fang Yuan smiled. He could feel that other than the contribution points that she could earn, this was the true purpose of Meng Lian bringing him here.

Getting new blood for the organisation was important. Needless to say, he was rather skilled as a dream master.

Furthermore, an identity token from her was already enough to strike fear in the Qin Family. Therefore, he could deduce the influence of the dream master she was working for.

Of course, Fang Yuan did not want to get himself into trouble and therefore casually replied her. He even rejected Meng Lian's invitation and continued his way on the streets.

'This person...'

Looking at Fang Yuan's disappearing silhouette, her eyes glittered. 'He is very wary of me, but this is normal. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to survive till now... My <Divine Lotus Heat Manual> is supposed to affect his mind, but it had no effect on him! He is not a normal person, and it is such a pity that the Dream Realm forbids us to use dream spells here. Otherwise, I would try planting a lotus print on him!'

"Great technique!"

Along the streets, Fang Yuan could see only a few people, but he did not let his guard down.

Everyone here was a worthy dream master. Looking at the numbers, all the dream masters of Da Qian should be here.

Thinking about Meng Lian's actions, Fang Yuan shuddered.

'That temptation and influence from her was not the simple bewildering spell anymore. It was from her passion and her nature. It is different from the evil spells and therefore I will be unable to guard against it! That lady has an ulterior motive!'

'Although the Dream Realm is great, I would not be so foolish as

to be tempted by it and stay here...'

As he smiled, he chose to leave.

"Peng!"

A white fog exploded and a full-grown man suddenly disappeared from the streets. However, the surrounding dream masters were not shocked by it as though they were already used to such occurrences.

...

In the real world.

As the water from the stream trickled outside, the surroundings were peaceful. Next to a green rock, a beautiful lady was hugging her knees and her eyes were closed. It was as though she had just fallen asleep.

"Wow! It seems like the time flow in the Dream Realm and the real world is roughly the same! It seems like not much time has passed..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head and smiled as he looked at Meng Lian, who was still in the Dream Realm.

As a Wu Zong, his spiritual aura was stronger and therefore, he would be more responsive and could awaken faster.

However, the fact that she dared to sleep out in the open meant that she must have some sort of protection in the form of magical equipment.

"Whoosh!"

As his ears twitched, Fang Yuan could detect the sound of wind.

It seemed like a few highly skilled martial artists were on their way here.

'Forget it...'

He gave a mysterious look as he looked at Meng Lian. 'Although

you had other motives, you did introduce me to the Dream Realm. I'll let you off this time!"

"Rumble!"

Three spiritual meridians appeared on his body, forming a spiritual armour.

The few martial artists immediately knew that they were being discovered. From then, they came out of hiding and rushed towards the cave using their elemental force.

Fang Yuan could detect that the person in front was Meng Lian's coachman the other day.

Based on his current abilities, it was possible for Fang Yuan to capture all of them. However, Meng Lian might have a treasure on her from a powerful dream master and therefore, it was not worth it to risk offending the powerful dream master.

With that, Fang Yuan sighed and tapped his feet lightly on the ground. Quickly, he leapt onto a tree branch and soon disappeared.

"Mistress!"

As the few Wu Zongs arrived at the river, they all heaved a sigh a relief seeing that Meng Lian was unharmed. Quickly, they guarded the surroundings.

After a while, Meng Lian's eyebrows twitched as she opened her eyes. "Where is he?"

"We are useless. He has gotten away!"

The person in front knelt down and asked for forgiveness.

"The few of you together can defeat a Wu Zong in the Meridian Opening Stage! How could you let him get away? And it's remarkable how he can recover from the dream world so quickly..."

Meng Lian blinked her eyes. "Indeed, talents come from everywhere!"

She did not think about the fact that if she did not harbour evil thoughts against Fang Yuan, he might not have been so alert.

"That person is highly skilled in martial arts and is in the Meridian Opening Stage. Please be careful, Divine Lady!"

As her subordinate reported, Meng Lian's expression changed.

"Got it... Fang Yuan, hmm?"

Looking in the direction which Fang Yuan left in, her eyes were filled with curiosity.

How could someone reach such a cultivation level in both martial arts and spiritual knight cultivation?

Who is this Fang Yuan?

...

On the 15th day, the Qin Family gathering was held.

As the Qin Siblings appeared, they were welcomed. Qin Yun was unanimously recommended to be the heir and the next family head and everything went smoothly like it was a dream.

As for the First Wife Lady Xu, news spread that she had died of illness. Of course, the Qin Siblings knew the real cause of her death and from then on, they had more respect and fear for Fang Yuan.

"The seeds have finally germinated. Next would be to wait for them to mature for harvest!"

Fang Yuan was constantly monitoring the movement of the Qin Family from the shadows.

Once Qin Yun took over as family head, he no longer appeared and seemed to have left.

"Alright, now is the time to explore the Dream Realm!"

In an underground cave, Fang Yuan appeared solemn. Shutting his eyes, he commenced his dream accessing technique.

Countless dream worlds appeared and were represented by

bubbles. Suddenly, all of them exploded.

A familiar spiritual aura was felt, and he walked straight into it without reservations.

The defence of the Dream Realm was almost nonexistent.

"Whoosh!"

As a glow flashed, the familiar corner of the street appeared.

"If I join any organisation, I would appear in their bases. But now, I am a lone cultivator, and can only depend on fate to see where I will appear?"

Fang Yuan snapped his fingers as a layer of fog shrouded over him.

Every dream master who came here would use such a technique to conceal their identity, making everything in the Dream Realm mysterious.

As he walked along the street, he started to examine everything.

"Spiritual objects? Techniques?"

Fang Yuan was already speechless as he arrived at a random spiritual plant shop.

On the counter, large amounts of spiritual plants were placed casually. Most of the spiritual plants were of Yellow Grade, and there were plants of Mysterious Grade as well. All of these were sold by weight and only the Earth Grade spiritual plants and above were given shelves of their own.

"These are... real objects! They are not created by dream masters!"

As someone who was in the Illusionary Divine Stage, he could recognise the difference the moment he picked up a purple Three Petalled Flower. It was not an object actualised by dream masters.

"It's real?"

He subconsciously muttered it out.

"Hey, are you new here?"

Behind the counter, a dream master wearing a ghost mask laughed. "If the Dream Realm could only trade information, what would be so useful about it? If you are a normal dream master, we can deliver it to any county within Da Qian Empire as long as you pay enough elemental crystals. Of course, if you are an Illusionary Divine dream master, you can accept it directly into your actualised dream world. Do you understand what I am talking about?"

Accepting it into the actualised dream world would mean that it could be immediately actualised and the dream elemental force used would not be Fang Yuan's own one.

He knew this, but under the sceptical eyes of the shopkeeper, he quickly left.

"Wouldn't it be an immediate delivery to deliver it directly to the actualised dream world?"

Walking along the streets and looking at the lively scene on both sides of the street, Fang Yuan was stunned.

"Can the actualised dream world accept real items? How does it work for the object to be actualised out?"

It was a sudden realisation that Fang Yuan knew too little about his profession as a dream master.

On the streets, there were many different stalls ranging from weapons stalls to spiritual pills and medicine. There were also spiritual arrays and everything was here. However, the cheapest would already cost an elemental crystal. For more expensive goods, contribution points were required.

Although he had collected quite a lot of spiritual treasures and had an entire spiritual land to himself, he still could not be considered wealthy.

At the end of the street, he arrived at an empty square.

"Whoosh!"

A hot stream of air gushed into his face, bringing him to another world.

Many dream masters were walking about in the square. Some of them were covered in a layer of fog, some ever wearing a hat and some bared it all. Occasionally, they would notice the middle of the square, and everyone was talking at the top of their voices. It was extremely lively.

"This is..."

In the middle of the square, there was a huge rock tablet. It was squarish in nature and was a pure black.

On the surface of the rock tablet, Da Qian words were carved in it and they were glowing with spiritual light. It was shimmering and attracted the attention of many.

"Buy for me a Three Eyed Grass, and I will pay you 5 contribution points!"

"Looking for a spiritual array master. Interested parties, please contact me!"

"Master Danfeng has a mission - forming a party! Require help to explore a secret world, requesting help from dream masters Illusionary Divine Stage and above. Must obey instructions and be agreeable to the splitting of loot..."

"Selling Limb Regeneration Pills. One pill for 20 contribution points! Made from a revered alchemy master, and the quality is guaranteed!"

...

Many messages appeared which confused Fang Yuan for a bit.

As he was reading the messages, he could see dream masters taking the initiative to walk up. They would place their own jade

inscription plates on the rock tablet and leave hurriedly. From there, he could roughly guess how everything worked.

Chapter 230: Fengxin

After a period of observation, Fang Yuan went forward and similarly took out his jade inscription plate and placed it on the rock tablet.

"Rumble!"

At that moment, there was an information overload in front of his eyes. It was as though this rock tablet was a huge ocean and tons of information were like fishes swimming around in front of him.

All he had to do was to 'fish' out any information which interests him.

'My foundations are still the weakest!'

Fang Yuan was extremely clear about his weakness. 'This is especially so for my cultivation as a dream master. I would be the most inexperienced because I have no master and no other dream masters to discuss my cultivation. Even though I am in the Illusionary Divine Stage, nothing would work out if I do not get my basics right!"

"I want information relevant to the basics of being a dream master!"

As his thought flowed out, it was like a bait, attracting many fishes to him.

"<The Basic Theory of Dream Masters>, will require 5 contribution points!"

"<Ten Questions About Dream Masters>, written by Shi Huzi. Will require 20 contribution points!!"

"<The Path to Illusionary Divine>, written by Venerable Tian Lan. Will require 50 contribution points!"

"<Records of the River of Dreams>, written by anonymous and is

incomplete. Will require 10 contribution points!!"

...

At that moment, all types of information regarding the cultivation of a dream master, records of experience and frequently asked questions appeared. It was indeed an overload of information.

Fang Yuan was enticed by all the recordings but as he looked at his plain-looking jade inscription plate, he was disappointed.

"Ah... I have nothing. One word, poor!"

He realised that he was lacking in contribution points! Lacking a lot!

"The dream masters in Da Qian Empire have a vast experience of the outside world. Their foundations would surely be stronger than mine. If I want to catch up, I'll have to put in more effort!"

The good thing was that there were a lot of interactions among the dream masters in Da Qian Empire. Just by spending contribution points, it should be easy to obtain the common things.

"It is extremely hard to gain contribution points. They don't even accept elemental crystals in exchange for contribution points... It seems that Meng Lian had gained quite a lot of contribution points by recommending me to the Dream Realm..."

At that moment, Fang Yuan felt like he was cheated by Meng Lian.

Since he could not exchange for contribution points, he could only go about selling things or completing missions.

"My fortune..."

Missions were dangerous and unpractical, and Fang Yuan immediately thought of selling things.

With a spiritual land and a Botany skill in hand, he could make

something out of it.

"Looking for missions - Selling spiritual plants!"

In his mind, everything flashed past.

Once his message flew out, the original fishes disappeared and new fishes came by.

"Looking for a Phoenix Tail Flower, price negotiable!"

"Need a Thousand Year Black Bamboo that is longer than 3 inches, willing to pay 100 contribution points!"

"Collecting all types of evolved spiritual flowers and plants. Price negotiable after meet up!"

...

Numerous pieces of information flashed by Fang Yuan and it was extremely convenient for him to sieve out what he was looking for.

As he slowly picked, he chose the message which was about collecting evolved spiritual flowers and plants.

"Whoosh!"

As his spiritual will shook, that specific piece of information flew out and a more detailed message appeared - "Collecting spiritual plants on a long-term basis, the rarer the better! Will offer a good price!"

On the window for contact information, there was a name 'Feng Xinzi' on it and a logo of a wind chime.

"This seems to be how I can contact him!"

Fang Yuan tried to touch it using his mind. Within seconds, an angry thought returned. "Who's that? Don't disturb me while I am doing alchemy!?"

'Illusionary Divine! A dream alchemy master? It seems that his magical energy is extremely strong! He is surely stronger than me!'

As his heart shook, he maintained his composure. "I've heard

that you need spiritual flowers and plants? I happen to have some stock with me, and these spiritual plants that I have cannot be found in Da Qian."

"Oh, such confidence!"

Feng Xinzi stopped what he was doing and reported a meeting point. "Wait for me at the square. If I find out that you are lying to me, hehe! You will not want to know what I would do to you."

"I am only afraid that you do not have enough contribution points!"

Fang Yuan was filled with confidence. He cut off the communication and came to a spot in the square.

Not long after, a man in green robes approached him. There was pill essence all over him which formed the shape of a Lingzhi. Just a sniff of it was enough for Fang Yuan to know that he was a high-tiered dream alchemy master. Thinking about it, even Lu Renjia might not be fitting to help this person wear his shoes.

"I am Feng Xinzi. Were you the one who left the message? I hope that whatever you have to offer me is worth my time away from my cauldron, otherwise..."

Feng Xinzi glanced at Fang Yuan and turned around. "Follow me!"

'Why are all these famous and powerful people so quirky?'

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders and followed behind.

Both of them arrived at a tea house. It was evident that Feng Xinzi was extremely familiar with this place. Without hesitation, he had booked a private room and crossed his legs as he sat down. "Alright... With the assurance of the Realm Spirit, whatever we discuss here will not leak out. Even if you take out spiritual plants of Heaven Grade, I will still have the ability to buy it!"

"I'm afraid to disappoint you. All my spiritual plants are only of

either Mysterious Grade or Yellow Grade. However, they are unique and I'm sure this would be the first time you are seeing them!"

Fang Yuan smiled. Suddenly, in his actualised dream world, a few spiritual plants appeared. Quickly, he actualised them into the Dream Realm.

"This is..."

Feng Xinzi scanned the plants quickly and his casual expression became a solemn one.

"Interesting, wonderful..."

He fiddled with the Flame Jade Rice in his hands as he was in disbelief. "Indeed... I have not seen such a spiritual plant before! Where did you get it from?"

Fang Yuan smiled but remained silent.

Firstly, Da Qian was already extremely separated from the mainland and Yuan and Wu Country. Communication was difficult between these regions and therefore it was normal for there to be differences in the spiritual plants.

Furthermore, how would Feng Xinzi come across this spiritual plant which was evolved specially by Fang Yuan?

"The effect of this spiritual rice ranks it at a Yellow Grade. It is fire-type with a hint of metallic properties. The most crucial thing about this plant is that it cannot be found anywhere in Da Qian. It can be planted in large scales and therefore from all these unique properties, it can be classified as a Mystery Grade!"

Feng Xinzi closed his eyes for a while before quoting a price. "If you don't mind selling it, I am willing to offer you 30 contribution points!"

"That's nice!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

He knew that for a Mystery Grade spiritual plant, it was a rather good price.

This was because firstly, this rice could be planted in large scales, which would benefit a lot of people. Secondly, Feng Xinzi had a generous personality, which was why he quoted a high price.

'This is the difference between the people from the mainland and Da Qian...'

Feng Xinzi kept the Flame Jade Rice properly. As he took out his inscription plate, Fang Yuan's own jade inscription plate had some changes. There was a faint golden '30' appearing on the plate.

In the mainland, the Flame Jade Rice would be a killer weapon which had the ability to support an entire sect. However, in Da Qian, many families would already have spiritual rice of Mystery Grade or even Earth Grade. If not for the fact that it was a new type of rice, it might not even be worth half the price that Feng Xinzi offered.

"I am extremely satisfied with your offer. Would you be interested to look at some other spiritual plants that I have with me?"

Seeing that Feng Xinzi had the intention to leave, Fang Yuan smiled and took out another few spiritual plants.

"Eh?"

As Feng Xinzi exclaimed, he examined the other few new spiritual plants. Immediately, he looked at Fang Yuan with a weird expression. "All of these are not seen in Da Qian before! Are you from the outer regions or from the other small worlds?"

'Outer regions? Other small worlds?'

Fang Yuan was shocked inside. 'Have the dream masters in Da Qian began to explore outside of Da Qian?'

After receiving this crucial piece of information, he remained

expressionless and signalled Feng Xinzi to look at this spiritual plants.

After a long while, Feng Xinzi was a little disappointed as Fang Yuan avoided his question. Slowly, he began to look at Fang Yuan's spiritual plants once again.

All of these spiritual plants had special traits evolved all these years while Fang Yuan was training.

Most of them were of Mystery Grade and Yellow Grade. Their effects were weird but unique in their own ways, but none of them had an important usage.

"Mm... Not bad indeed!"

Although Feng Xinzi was shrouded in his own pill essence and his face was covered, there was joy in his voice. "I have never heard or seen all these spiritual plants. May I offer you 50 contribution points for all of them?"

"Of course!"

Fang Yuan immediately agreed and started to pack it up for him.

With a laughter, Feng Xinzi kept the spiritual plants properly. "If you have any other spiritual plants next time, remember to look for me! My offer will surely be better than what others can offer!"

With that, the symbol of a wind chime floated up and landed in Fang Yuan's hands.

"Of course!"

Fang Yuan kept the symbol and imprinted it on his jade inscription plate. It was comparable to exchanging numbers with Feng Xinzi if this was his previous life.

"Goodbye!"

"I'll see you!"

As they placed their fists together, Fang Xinzi's silhouette

disappeared.

In a corner of Da Qian Empire.

Within an underground alchemy room.

Feng Xinzi opened his eyes. There was a glitter in his eyes.
"Actualise!"

On the table in front of him, a spiritual light glittered and the Flame Jade Rice and other spiritual plants appeared.

"Great... I won't be wrong about this!"

Although they were low-grade spiritual plants, Feng Xinzi was still extremely excited. "Evolved spiritual plants! I can't go wrong! With them, by Ten-thousand Pill Cauldron will be improved! Haha... Haha..."

...

The Dream Realm.

'Feng Xinzi is an alchemy master. The purpose of him buying all my spiritual plants should be to do further research and produce new spiritual pills, I believe?'

Fang Yuan returned to the square, still deep in his own thoughts.

'The actualised dream world brings so much convenience to dream masters!'

Every dream masters' own actualised dream world was their own tiny private space. They could use dream elemental force to produce objects of all kinds and actualise them into the real world. The consumption of dream elemental force would vary from person to person and from object to object.

However, if done in reverse, for instance placing a real object into the actualised dream world, the object could be traded with another dream master. From then, they would only require a small amount of dream elemental force to transfer and be retrieved out by another dream master. This would be an extremely convenient

way of trading. However, the disadvantage would be that the requirement for doing this was extremely high. Dream masters had to be either at the Illusionary Divine stage and above.

'Why do I feel like a delivery man?'

As he approached the center of the square, his eyes glittered.
"Search - Buying the Basics of dream masters!!"

Chapter 231: Dream Soldier Master

In the dream world, purchasing information took little time.

As long as the payment in terms of contribution points was made, the purchased information would appear immediately in the form of jade scroll guarded by a realm spirit which proved its authenticity.

"Dream Master's Basic Introduction, purchase!"

"Dream Master's 10 Questions, Shi Huzi requested 20 contribution points for it! Purchased!"

"Dream Creek Records, bought!"

"The Path of Illusion, the Tianlan People requested 50 contribution points! Buy...oh, I do not have sufficient contribution points again!"

Fang Yuan looked at his reduced contribution points on his inscription plate and the 3 manuals in his hand. He could not help but feel dumbfounded. "Selling manuals containing insights in cultivation is daylight robbery...if one more dream master were to purchase this information, they would gain another portion of contribution points."

However, he knew clearly that unless one was talented or famous, it would be wishful thinking for a dream master to become prosperous with just the manuals alone.

Fang Yuan left the Square and arrived in the alleys. He took out the 'Dream Master's 10 Questions' and flipped through it.

The pages of this ancient manual were yellow and its cover was hard. It appeared glossy and no matter how one looked at it, it looked like a treasure. As Fang Yuan's hand descended onto the manual, there was a flash of light which engraved itself onto Fang Yuan's forehead.

"Oh..."

Fang Yuan grew dizzy and in his sea of consciousness, a wall of text appeared. "Dream Masters make use of heaven and earth to become the master of all living things! In the beginning, dream masters were prosperous and were aware of the 10 questions..."

The 10 questions were simple and philosophical. Fang Yuan could tell that the author had reached the pinnacle of being a dream master just by reading the text.

After finishing the book, he turned his attention to the 'Dream Master's Basic Introduction'. While the book explained difficult concepts in simple terms, it provided Fang Yuan with a solid foundation and clearly recorded the path after the Illusionary Divine Stage. As such, Fang Yuan was able to have a better understanding of his strengths and weaknesses.

However, what caused Fang Yuan to be astonished was the 'Dream Creek Records' which appeared to be handwritten!

The manual was in tatters and was full of colloquial speech. However, it managed to portray the problems that the dream masters faced.

"After becoming a dream master and travelling through the Da Qian Empire, I have discussed swords with the sword masters, compared knives with the knife enthusiasts, ruled the beasts, remained undefeated and studied the different pathways under the heavens. This resulted in me feeling deeply that the path of a dream master is to use the blessings of heavens and earth and might not even be of this world!"

"When one is born, and by the time he reaches adulthood, he would have to ponder upon where he came from and where to go from there. Where do we, as dream masters, come from? Dream elemental force, the ability to actualize objects pique my interest!"

"...After thousands of comparison, I dare conclude that every

pathway of cultivation requires the use of heavens and earth's power for one to be extraordinary. Why do dream masters require so many resources? There can only be one reason! The difference between dream masters and Wu Zongs or spiritual knights! The dream elemental force that we require does not originate from this world! It is from another higher dimension which is able to support the dream master's ability to actualize objects...we can even say that the Illusionary Divine Stage is entirely based on upon the unknown source of power!"

"The final outcome of any pathway to cultivation is to return to one's roots, to search for the source of the power... I dare predict, that in order for a dream master to surpass himself, he needs to find his roots, the origin of everything!"

...

The records only contained a few pages but it was enough to shock Fang Yuan.

"It appears that the dream masters already knew the existence of another world and have even started exploring it!"

"It seems that the ability to actualize objects in the Illusionary Divine Stage is not just purely dependent on one's intense training, it requires the source of the dream masters' power..."

Fang Yuan had long sensed it.

If he had gone about doing things his previous way, in order for a dream master to actualize an object, he would need to thoroughly analyse the laws of the world which was impossible for anyone to accomplish.

However, throughout history, there were many dream masters who have reached the Illusionary Divine Stage. The only possibility was the addition of an external source of power which greatly simplified the process of reaching the Illusionary Divine Stage.

Fang Yuan's mind wandered, and he imagined that when he broke through to the Illusionary Divine Stage, a ray of white light bestowed upon him the ability to create an actualized dream world and the ability to actualize objects as the giant door shattered!

"Dream Master World!"

"This is the name that the author give to the world where dream masters originated from! Ever since this writing was published, all the dream masters desired to find this world. However, no one was able to succeed till today..."

Just a small leakage from the Dream Master World was sufficient to supplement a dream master's power and allow him to actualize an object.

If one is able to find the Dream Master World, wouldn't he become extraordinary and divine, forever having nothing to worry about?

It was precisely because of this conjecture that spurred the later generations of dream masters to search for leads regarding the Dream Master World.

"There are talents in every generation...there has been rapid progression in the changes in the Da Qian dream master's world in the few short years that my master lived in seclusion."

Fang Yuan nodded his head and felt excited. "However... I like this atmosphere!"

Fang Yuan had previously chased after longevity and eternity, but it had always been smoke and mirrors.

Now, he suddenly saw a possibility of success.

The excitement felt was similar to the feelings that a traveler, who had been travelling for a long time in the dark and had suddenly seen the light, would feel.

"Of course...the Dream Master World and the likes are still too

far ahead of me. I should be considering the path to take after reaching the Illusionary Divine Stage!"

Fang Yuan grew serious.

After reaching the Illusionary Divine Stage, there were different pathways to take, the simplest being the dream spell master, followed by the dream soldier master, dream alchemy master, dream array master, dream beast master and the mysterious dream prophet master. There were all kinds of abilities and different pathways even though the end goal was to create an actualized dream world. The pathways taken were different and as such, each pathway had its own unique features.

"This is due to the fact that creating a whole dream world is too difficult and as such, the dream masters start with a portion of the laws and expand from there. As such, their abilities are different as well!"

Fang Yuan thought of his own master's inheritance.

Master Heartless took the path to become a dream soldier master after reaching the Illusionary Divine Stage.

A dream soldier master created magical soldiers in his own dream world by first giving the magical soldiers form. With the condensed dream elemental force, the troop's prowess increase and their thoughts can become a reality. They will be able to topple mountains and overturn the seas [1]. They are able to adapt and react to all types of situations. In the end, a dream soldier master would be able to use this pathway to have a better understanding of the world!

As for a dream spell master, he would be able to develop thousands of spells with a single thought. A dream array master would be to form an array in his dreams in an instant. If the elder of Xu Family was a dream array master and was able to call upon his arrays from his dream world, he would not have come to such a sorry end.

"A dream beast master create their paths using summoning spells. He uses dream elemental energy to actualize all sorts of wild beasts and summon a large army of beasts. Of course, there is a branch in this pathway which specializes in transforming one's own body to become ancient beasts etc, inheriting their abilities and at the same time retaining the dream master's intellect. It is difficult to master..."

The introduction to the basics of dream master was enough to dazzle Fang Yuan.

"Furthermore...all the pathways are not mutually exclusive and are able to complement each other. It is just that the time taken would be multiplied. There is also the issue with aptitude of the cultivator and as such, the cons outweigh the benefits..."

Given his current abilities, he was only able to use a few dream spell master's techniques. Even other types of dream masters would not reject the use of dream elemental force to create dream spells in order to aid themselves in their chosen pathways. However, they pale in comparison to a true dream spell master who is able to cast thousands of dream spells with a single thought.

Only with single-hearted devotion can one achieve results.

Regardless of which pathway, the outcome was still the same. All the routes lead to the same destination and as such, it was a waste of effort to walk multiple paths.

"Where does my path lies?"

Fang Yuan sighed. Truth be told, he did not have many options.

While a dream soldier master might not be the strongest amongst the dream masters, there was no doubt that the inheritance in his hand was the most complete.

"Firstly, I do not have enough contribution points to search for the techniques of the other pathways. Secondly, these techniques might not be able to compare to what my master gave

me...Afterall, my master's dream soldier master inheritance is a secret inheritance and contain other mysteries. Furthermore, it is extremely compatible with me..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and made up his mind.

Fang Yuan had achieved much in the pathway of martial arts and was not willing to give it up. Choosing the pathway of a dream soldier master would undoubtedly maximize his potential in martial arts.

"Master's dream soldier master pathway is a secret inheritance called the 'Eight Gates Sword Array' which possessed some characteristics of a spiritual array. 8 magical soldiers are created in the dream world to form an array and when required, they can be summoned to assassinate opponents or act as protection for the user! It complements my martial arts!"

The 8 Gates Sword Array used the 8 trigrams [2] as its foundation which encompassed all the living things in the heavens and earth. The fine changes within were limitless.

"While the 8 Gates Sword Array is effective, it does have a downside to it. Its characteristics are obvious and as such, if the enemies of my master see it, I will be in deep trouble..."

"Furthermore, my martial arts is another limiting factor!"

Fang Yuan's Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique was developed by himself and was currently in the beginning stage of forming the 4th spiritual meridian. However, he was unable to proceed further.

In order to achieve a breakthrough, he only had 2 options.

The first option was to obtain the entire manual of Yang Family's technique, the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique and combine it to fill up the gaps in the Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique.

The second option was to use his contribution points and request the help of a more skillful dream master to perfect his technique!

Due to their actualized dream world, dream masters were able to deduce martial arts techniques.

Fang Yuan faced difficulties and was unable to further improve his Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique. However, that did not mean that other dream masters were unable to do so!

If that was the case, it would be difficult to keep the technique a secret and as such, Fang Yuan was unwilling to seek the help of other dream masters.

"Maybe...I should put up posters requesting to buy the entire volume of the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique manual?

Fang Yuan muttered to himself.

The Yang Family was exterminated by Qing Gui. As such, it was likely that the in-house technique was spread to the outsiders.

Afterall, there were so many dream masters in Da Qian with treasures and information as long as one was able to pay the price!

[1] A Chinese saying which means that they possess immerse power.

[2] The 8 trigrams eight symbols used in Taoist cosmology to represent the fundamental principles of reality, seen as a range of eight interrelated concepts.

Chapter 232: Inform

Qin Manor.

In the main library of the manor, Qin Yun was draped in robes of dark gold. He wore a silver circlet on his crown, and a pencil mustache above his lips. It seemed as though he had calmed down.

Incense of premium quality burned on in the room. The rich scent of ambergris permeated the air.

All was silent, except for the steady rattle of an abacus. Qin Qing was present too, and his skillful hands danced on the abacus as if he was playing a musical instrument. Before him lay a huge pile of account books.

As the figurehead of the Qin clan, Qin Yun had not managed to find any reliable underlings. Other than his own sister, there was no one that he trusted.

After a while, the clacking sounds of the abacus beads ceased. Qin Qing scribbled some notes on paper before settling himself down on a chair. He let out a sigh and rubbed his forehead vigorously.

"What is the situation?"

Qin Yun served up a cup of spiritual tea and asked his question casually.

"Last year...the various holdings of our clan, including the group at Soul Mountain, raked in a total of 108,500 elemental crystals. Of course, they are of poor quality...less the amount distributed to the different branches of the family, there would be 50,000 elemental crystals left over!"

Qin Qing displayed no hint of happiness but gave off vibes of depression.

"But other than the usual expenses, we have to manage the Vast Sea Army as well. This year, we are projected to spend at least

20,000 elemental crystals, and we'll have to pay a tribute of 40,000 of elemental crystals to the Elders' Hall. We still have to pander to the various requests of the elders and source for valuable spiritual herbs and spices. All of these require a large amount of time and effort..."

Hiss

Qin Yun sucked in a breath of cold air.

"So, this means that the Qin clan is barely making ends meet?"

"Having looked through the accounts, this seems to be the case. In the past few years, Lady Xu has been tapping on the Qin clan's reserves...regardless of how much wealth our predecessors had hoarded, we'll go broke if we continue to spend at this rate, unless...we cut down on other overheads!"

Qin Qing shook his head.

"The running costs of the Qin clan are already as lean as they can be. They can be reduced no further. The only things we can potentially cut down on are the tributes to the Elders' Hall and the Vast Sea Army... and yet, these are untouchable!"

Qin Yun shook his head vigorously in reply.

The Vast Sea Army was the personal guard of the Vast Sea Viscount. After assuming his title, he came into possession of the magical commanding weapon of the Vast Sea Army. He now had the loyalty of 500 men at his immediate disposal. There was no reason for him to restrain his own power.

The tribute to the Elders' Hall was a large one, but there was no other choice. If the tribute was compromised in any way, the elders could penalise him under the family laws, or even cast him out of the clan!

"If we cannot stem these numerous outflows, we will have to create additional sources of income..."

As Qin Yun spoke, a peculiar change came over his facial expression, and he rubbed the back of his neck.

The imprint of a black datura had appeared on his skin, and the flower petals were spreading as if they were alive.

"Our lord is summoning us..."

Qin Yun murmured.

With regards to His Lordship, Qin Yun was both in awe and grateful.

What was the Xu Clan to them? Even with the backing of a Spiritual Array Master, they suffered great losses anyway and had already dropped out from the list of Dongyi County elite families. The remnants of their clan continue to be on the run from their enemies and were leading wretched lives. The Qin siblings had played a part in damning the Xu clansmen and considered it their revenge.

Also, with Fang Yuan's help, the Qin clan was now larger than the Xu clan in size, had gotten rid of Lady Xu, and Qin Yun was even raised to the position of clan leader. How powerful was he exactly?

Thus, Qin Yun had nothing but respect and gratitude for Fang Yuan.

"This method...actually managed to fool the clan elders, we should quickly go pay our respects!"

Qin Qing nodded his head, passed down some instructions, and followed Qin Yun out of the manor.

There was a famous place in Dongyi County called Sha Zhou Leng, and it was always crowded with people.

At this point, a horse carriage parked in the shadows discreetly, with the Qin siblings seated cross-legged within. Both of them had

looks of unease on their faces.

"Why isn't His Lordship here yet? Did something serious crop up?"

"Or perhaps...we've been tailed?"

Qin Qing, with her ice-cold intelligence, knew that being the head of the Qin clan did not come with complete control over the clan.

At the very least, behind the clan leader, the Elders' Hall loomed and was influential in every management aspect of the Qin clan.

Qin Yun, even as the clan leader, continued to face severe limitations in his work.

"Will His Lordship...be afraid of the Qin Elders' Hall?"

As Qin Qing shook her head, a wave of fatigue swept over her without warning. She suddenly felt drowsy and her eyelids were getting heavier by the second. She then fell asleep, head leaning against the carriage walls.

"Ehh? Sister!"

Qin Yun exclaimed in surprise and began to channel his elemental force for self defence.

Qin Yun had already reached the Wu Zong level of martial arts cultivation, having broken through the 12 Gates!

However, following the infiltration of a stream of gas into the carriage, Qin Yun fell unconscious to the floor anyway.

"Where...what is this place?"

Qin Yun experienced a strong feeling of weightlessness, and he sprang to his feet forcefully, only to find that he was in the middle of a foggy wasteland. A wispy figure in the vicinity caught his eye.

"Yun?"

"Sister!"

Qin Yun ran forward and grasped the cold palm of Qin Qing.

"Where are we?"

"If I'm not wrong, we are in our dream world!"

Qin Qing was certain of it.

"Good! Clearly intelligent. It's a good thing that I have promoted you two!"

The mists converged into the figure of a youth wearing white robes. It was Fang Yuan.

"Oh, I see that His Lordship is a Dream Master. It's our fault for not realising it earlier!"

Qin Qing pulled Qin Yun along and hurriedly bowed to Fang Yuan respectfully.

Her heart, however, was pounding hard in alarm.

His Lordship had previously proved himself to be a Wu Zong and well versed in spiritual spells. The Qin siblings understood that he was a master of both martial arts and magic, and that was that. They had no idea that he was a Dream Master too!

In the Da Quan world, the status of a Dream Master was much higher than that of a spiritual knight.

To put it brusquely, even the lowest leveled Dream Master could be on an equal footing as Qin Yun, Lord of the Qin clan and Vast Sea Viscount!

"You may rise! Qin Yun, you have done well to assume the leadership of the Qin clan...you've even become a Wu Zong?"

Fang Yuan exuded indifference as he spoke.

The changes within Qin Yun's body was obvious to Fang Yuan.

Besides, this was a low levelled Wu Zong. He had killed too many of them to care.

"His Lordship has astounding eyesight!"

Although he had entered the realm of elemental force himself, in front of Fang Yuan, Qin Yuan spoke as though he was a cowering youth. Even his voice was quivering.

Qin Yun finally understood why the Elders were unable to detect Fang Yuan's Restriction.

The ways of a Dream Master were indeed unpredictable.

Of course, Fang Yuan had the intention to conceal too.

Otherwise, if the truth was out, the Elders would not have agreed to let a Restricted individual assume leadership of the clan.

Qin Yun's eyes darted about quickly, and his thoughts ran wild.

Fang Yuan's display of power must have been meant to intimidate the Qin siblings and to remind them that having received his help, they were bound to him.

Thus, Qin Yun exclaimed, "His Lordship has aided us in our revenge, and we will forever be grateful to you. From now on, the Qin siblings are at your service!"

"Hey, you are too serious!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand, and the Qin siblings got to their feet quickly.

"Now...all I need you two to do is to find out two things for me. First, the rise and fall of a certain clan, and everything else about it. Second, I want the map of the Da Qian empire, palace layouts, clan territories, the various factions and how they are organised. Give me everything you can find out!"

"You have been careless today, and people are watching. From now on, we shall communicate in the dream world..."

"What?"

The Qin siblings were stunned, and as they looked at each other,

they thought of the Elders' Hall.

"Yes my Lord!"

"Very well, you two may go!"

As Fang Yuan nodded, the dream world dissipated.

In the horse carriage, Qin Yun awoke with a start and looked at Qin Qing. As they made eye contact, they understood that everything that had happened was real.

"Let's go back!"

Qin Qing pressed Qin Yun's palm knowingly.

"I understand!"

Qin Yun nodded vigorously. Fan Yuan was the most powerful person in the equation and had to be obeyed. Also, Qin Qing seemed to have the intention of challenging the Elders' Hall with Fang Yuan's backing.

Although the Qin siblings knew that they were playing with fire, they had no choice because they were Restricted.

"But anyway...these people dared to tail me, they must be wiped out!"

Qin Yun pulled the curtains aside and noticed a few shadows darting out of his view. A cold determination settled over him.

At this point, falling out with the Elders' Hall was unwise. But he had to send them a message.

As the newly appointed leader of the Qin clan, how could he not demonstrate his power?

A short distance away, Fang Yuan wore a farmer's hat and blended in with the tourists, looking as though he was enjoying the sights of Sha Zhou Leng. His lips curled up into a slight smile.

'The ways of a Dream Master are mysterious and profound. Only a casual usage of the relevant skills yielded such great effects!'

So what if someone was tailing us?

Even if he had been giving instructions to the Qin siblings right in front of them, they would be powerless to do anything.

Only another Dream Master could challenge a Dream Master!

"Now I believe that the Dream Master is definitely not a native role of the Da Qian world. It is much more complex than the other techniques and defies logic..."

The more Fang Yuan practised, the more he believed the contents of the journals within the 'Dream Creek Records' to be true.

"Absolute martial force would give absolute power and influence!"

He stared at the desert in front of him with a serious look on his face.

"A Dream Master not only wields great power, he also provides vital resources. He is totally self sufficient and can even supply the outside world...with these abilities, is it possible to not crave for power?"

Fang Yuan knew the answer. There was no way he could resist.

"Although I have no idea how the Da Qian royalty continues to stand to this day, it must be a precarious balance. Perhaps, all it will take is just a little push to break them, and when that happens..."

He sniffed and seemed to catch the smell of blood and fire. This was the smell of the war to come!

Chapter 233: Sword Array

Actualised Dream World.

As the foundation of an Illusionary Divine Stage dream master, Fang Yuan's dream world was very small. It was no taller than 2.6 metres and its circumference was no longer than 3.2m.

"The cultivation of the Illusionary Divine Stage is the cultivation of the actualised dream world. One day, this will become a true world!"

In the centre of the heavens and earth, Fang Yuan's true consciousness appeared, one hand pointed at the sky and the other hand pressing against the earth.

"Crash!"

Dream elemental force surged forth and flushed the borders of the actualised dream world.

With every wave, the chaos of the outside world was washed away. The actualised dream world started expanding at a slow rate.

"The journey of a dream master in the Illusionary Divine Stage is a long and arduous one. Who knows how much effort is needed to reach the Prominent Divine Stage!"

Fang Yuan sighed.

Every day after he completed his work, he would go out and arrive at an open field.

"Dream soldier master, in the beginning, his primary focus is to actualize soldiers and uses martial arts as a supplement. In the end, he will walk the path of training his soldiers to have a better understanding of the world...Truth be told, it is to start with laws regarding weapons and the likes before moving on to grasping the laws of the world! Any pathway of a dream master will ultimately reach to the same end-goal!"

"My Master's secret teachings, known as the 8 Gates Sword Array incorporate the essences of arrays and martial arts. Its prowess is unparalleled. It uses the 8 trigrams as its foundation, and is able to transform and adapt to suit the situation!"

Fang Yuan have read through Master Heartless's inheritance many times. At this time, verses of chants flashed across the bottom of his heart, and he understood all the verses completely.

He sat cross-legged and his spiritual will penetrated the emptiness. He started to gather his previously-expended dream elemental force.

When his essence, energy and magic had recovered to their peak levels, Fang Yuan stood up, and suddenly shouted, "8 Gates Sword Array, rise!"

"Whoosh!"

Sword radiance flashed!

All kinds of blue, red and golden coloured swords converged, with multiple colours flashing. The sharpness of the blades was threatening. Suddenly, the swords fell to the ground and in the centre of the actualised dream world, 8 hazy sword shadows appeared.

Once the array appeared, the whole atmosphere within the space changed. It was as if sharp wills started to gather.

"Only the path is set at the start. Not a single divine soldier gather...this is merely beginning!"

Fang Yuan looked at the flickering sword shadows and shook his head, "At the peak of my master's cultivation, he completed the 8 Gates Sword Array. At my current level, it is very difficult to actualize 1 divine soldier. The good thing about this array is that it does not require the 8 divine soldiers to converge. The array can be used even if it was just 1, 2 or 3 divine soldiers [1]!"

He turned his gaze towards the South with a solemn expression.

Over there, under a red cloud, a scarlet sword essence appeared to be holding up the heavens like a giant pillar. Within it, the sword's shadow was hazy.

"The true South gifts flames! This is for the fire-type sword! The easiest to gather amongst the 8 Gates Sword Array! It is the best place for me to start!"

Fang Yuan consumed Flame Jade Rice daily and as such, his fire-type energy was the most abundant. Naturally, it would aid him in his cultivation of the fire sword.

"South-leaving Fire, listen to my command, fire-type sword, gather!"

A beam of light shot from his eyes and onto the red sword pillar.

"Crash!"

Dream elemental force as vast as the sea surged forth and entered the fire-type pillar. The fire-type sword momentarily appeared as it started to actualize.

The sword was around 1 metre long and the blade was scarlet in colour with simple and mysterious markings engraved upon it. The hilt of the sword was in the shape of a fiery dragon. The whole sword appeared to be a raging flame and yet, there was a hint of green will.

The sword shadow, which was originally an illusion started to become real.

"10%?"

After a long time, with his dream elemental force depleted, Fang Yuan looked at the shadow and was pleased.

It was no easy feat to actualize a magical soldier.

What he had done so far was to create a form. He still had to slowly train.

Afterall, even if he had gathered the 8 spiritual swords and

complete the array. It was a huge task to separate the array from the actualised dream world and actualise it in the real world.

The path to reach the Prominent Divine Stage was indeed long and difficult!

Every actualised sword and the dream soldier master's cultivation would bring about enormous changes. When the 8 swords are gathered, it would be enough to shock the heavens and earth, make demons and deities afraid. The array would clear the path before him.

"This 8 Gates Sword Array is split into levels according to the number of magical soldiers actualised. The most basic is the 1 sword, followed by 2 swords, when at last the 8 swords form the array, it can affect the heavens and earth, one step at a time, clearing the way forward!"

Fang Yuan stroked his chin, "It feels like this is similar to the spiritual meridians of the Wu Zongs!"

For a Wu Zong in the Meridian Opening Realm, the spiritual meridians were gathered and split into different levels. In each level, the battle prowess of the Wu Zong was different.

"I hear that after a spiritual knight reaches the Elemental Opening Realm, the next step in his cultivation would be to link his spiritual points!"

"Other dream master pathways are roughly similar and can be split into 8 or 9 realms..."

After remembering the recently-purchased information, Fang Yuan no longer had any confusion regarding the cultivation in the Elemental Opening Realm.

For an ordinary cultivator, the main focus of cultivation was to attain the elemental force!

It was only after breaking through the Elemental Gathering Realm could a cultivator be considered extraordinary and

considered to be on a path of cultivation.

This step was known as cultivation to become a Wu Zong, spiritual knight or dream master.

The second step was to reach the opening of spiritual meridians of the Wu Zongs and elemental opening points for the spiritual knights. The dream masters were different depending on the pathways taken but they all had around 9 gates to be broken through.

"The third step, which is also the last step, is to return to their roots and seek the real meaning and source of the elemental force. In the pathway of martial arts, it would be to complete the opening of the spiritual meridians and the formation of the Divine Body. The last step is not known for the spiritual knights and as for the dream master, it would be to reach the Prominent Divine Stage!"

There are vast differences in power between the levels in the 9 gates of elemental opening. Furthermore, becoming a dream master is much more advantageous compared to the other 2 pathways..."

Fang Yuan looked at his stat board and realized that there were changes to it after he made the realization:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 21

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: Illusionary Divine Stage, Wu Zong (3 Meridians)

Technique: Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique [Grade 4(1%)], Hundred Poison Golden Body [1st Refining Stage], 8 Gates Sword Array [1 sword (10%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"If I calculated correctly, I am currently at the power level of a Wu Zong in the 4th level and a dream master in the first level of the Illusionary Divine Stage?"

Fang Yuan was stumped, "It is just that this is not reflected in my actual battle power..."

At least, with his current cultivation at the Illusionary Divine Stage, he would be able to overpower Wu Zongs who opened 3 or 4 spiritual meridians. The Wu Zong would not even be able to escape.

"The main focus of my cultivation now is to firstly, perfect my Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique and secondly, gather the fire sword..."

Truth be told, this Leaving Fire Sword was the interpretation of the fire-type pathways in the world. In other words, this was the gathering of the laws of fire in Fang Yuan's actualised dream world.

"Other than slowly grinding using the dream elemental force, it is only in the dream world can one find a treasure which aid in his cultivation..."

Fang Yuan nodded before shaking his head.

"Whoosh!"

Suddenly, the 8 Gates Sword Array shook and the scarlet sword essence exploded, causing Fang Yuan to be surprised.

He looked up and saw that the Leaving Fire Sword pillar, which had started to actualise a few percentage point, supporting the heavens and earth had raised the dream world by another 20 centimeters.

That was not all. Countless of Leaving Fire Sword essence appeared and eliminated the chaos surrounding the dream world, causing his actualised to expand at a rate multiple times faster than when he used his dream elemental force to grind his dream world.

"This is the true way to cultivate the dream world!"

Fang Yuan sighed as he made that realization.

At that moment, he was considered to have just started his cultivation in the Illusionary Divine Stage.

"With the 8 Gates Sword Array in place, my dream world would continue to expand and actualise even without my management!"

Fang Yuan nodded in gratification as he deeply felt the formidability of being a dream soldier master.

In the real world.

In a secluded valley where the vegetation was lush and the area deserted.

Within a cave, Fang Yuan sat cross-legged as he absorbed the surrounding essence to his limit. He suddenly opened both his eyes.

"Fire Sword!"

With a wave of his hand, a scarlet sword essence measuring a few centimetres appeared and fell down swiftly!

"Chi"

On the ground, a scorched mark which extended in a straight line for a few metres could be seen.

"Although the Fire Sword has not been completely formed, its sword essence can be adjusted and its power is no less than an ordinary divine soldier. The most crucial point is that it can be perfectly commanded like how an arm is able moves the finger [2] ... in the future, I will be able to use the sword essence to fend off an enemy or maybe complement it with my martial arts. How does '8 Meridians Divine Sword' sounds?"

Fang Yuan stoked his chin and drew out a thread of his dream elemental force.

After several bouts of changes, Fang Yuan started to worry as he saw the thread of dark red amidst the chaos.

"It would be better to get rid of the hidden dangers left behind in the Three World Mountain.

His spiritual will shifted and in an instant, he entered a dream and arrived at the dream world.

"Gather information – Three World Mountain, dream master!"

Before the 4 rock tablets, Fang Yuan retrieved his emerald order plate and started searching.

Due to the fact that what he needed was scattered information, the information was not too expensive but his inheritance was completely cleared.

"Three World Mountain divides 3 worlds and hence, its name. 900 years ago, Tian Xiezi, a dream master from the Evil Divine Sect fell here, causing the dream world to transform into an illusionary world, in between reality and illusion. It is a natural stronghold, and all travelers, regardless of whether they go with the flow or against the flow, met their downfall. Dream masters dare not approach for fear of meeting misfortune..."

Fang Yuan's expression changed after reading the contents of the report.

"Nothing...there is no information regarding this type of dark force. It seems that the only lead is Tian Xiezi of the Evil Divine Sect?"

Fang Yuan had heard of, and was very familiar with, the name.

However, it was not from his, but Fang Yan's dream world!

"After becoming the Eagle Lieutenant, I have investigated and finally realized that Qing Gui was a dream master of the Evil Divine Sect!"

Fang Yuan's eyes looked serene: "Looks like...my affinity with

him is not so easily broken."

With this type of force mixed into his dream elemental force, Fang Yuan might suffer in the future even if the consequences were not obvious yet!

Given Fang Yuan's character, he would definitely not allow this ticking time-bomb to remain on his body.

As such, it was imperative that he made a trip to Evil Divine Sect and seek out the source of the dark force!

"This trip is still too difficult given my current standard..."

Fang Yuan shook his head, "Perhaps...I can try asking for assistance to search for a method to get rid of foreign force within my dream elemental force...contribution points, the most important is still the contribution points!"

After multiple searches, he had used up all his contribution points.

"I need to quickly raise a huge sum of contribution points!"

He looked towards the stone tablets, his gaze solemn.

[1] The technique handed down by Master Wenxin is unique, as such, the soldiers are swords.

[2] A Chinese idiom which means that the sword is able to be perfectly commanded like an extension of one's own body.

Chapter 234: Organisations

In the Dream Realm.

"Look at my spiritual plants! They are full of spirituality and the price is worth it!"

Fang Yuan covered himself in a fog as he looked at a trader in front of him. "10 contribution points! I can't go any lower!"

"Fine! Since these are new spiritual plants!"

In front of him was a huge golden glow. The dream master concealed inside must be plump-sized. Now that they had come to an agreement, he took over a huge number of spiritual plants.

"Eh..."

After a while, as Fang Yuan looked at his bare looking inscription plate, he shook his head in disappointment. "It's too slow! Too slow... If I continue at this speed, who knows when I would save up enough contribution points..."

He did not bring the entire Green Peak spiritual land with him and could only spend all that he brought along with him.

Furthermore, the spiritual plants planted in his spiritual land were of low grade and the only selling point for them was the fact that they were a novelty in Da Qian.

"After doing a stocktake, there are a few that I cannot sell, like the mysterious spiritual seed..."

Fang Yuan thought about it. If he really did want to sell it, he was confident that he could get a good offer from Feng Xinzi.

That dream alchemy master was really generous. Unfortunately, he was only interested in new types of spiritual plants and he would only buy small quantities of them. After a few transactions with him, Fang Yuan could only continue to sell his spiritual plants to other people.

"It seems that the only way to get more contribution points is to do missions..."

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and at that moment, he felt as though he had gone through a bottleneck.

At this point in time where he still could not rely solely on his skill in Botany to make a living, the only way he could get more contribution points was to do missions.

The good thing was that he would be rewarded heavily by the rock tablet regardless if he were to take up the mission to be a helper, assassin or explorer.

"Fang Yuan, are you there?"

Just as Fang Yuan was deep in his thoughts, his jade inscription plate glittered. The symbol of a wind chime appeared and from there was the voice of Feng Xinzi.

"I am in the Dream Realm!"

Fang Yuan was respectful towards this loyal customer of him.

"That's good! Come to the tea house, I have something to tell you!"

Feng Xinzi sounded serious. "You... need contribution points right? I have a mission here, and you might be interested in it....."

"Oh? I'll be there right away!"

Fang Yuan was decided as he came to the tea house which they first met.

As usual, Feng Xinzi booked a private room and sat inside. The pill essence wrapped around him in the shape of a Lingzhi, making him look like a deity.

"Brother Feng!"

Fang Yuan greeted him and came straight to the point. "Why would you think of me?"

"This is because I have done business with you a few times and feel that you are a trustworthy person!"

Feng Xinzi looked down.

As dream masters, they had a keen sense of feel. The first impression was paramount for them to decide if the person was good or bad.

"Furthermore, you have the ability since you are in the Illusionary Divine stage! I am lacking in one more person, and therefore I thought of you!"

Feng Xinzi spoke the truth.

"Ah... I am honoured!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. "May I know what type of mission it is?"

"Exploration! Exploring a newly discovered small world!"

Feng Xinzi replied.

'An exploration mission?'

Fang Yuan raised his cup as he hid his fears. 'I knew that dream masters were able to communicate through worlds. I never thought that I would start my first mission exploring a new world.'

"Can I first take a look at the information regarding the mission?"

He asked as he remained expressionless.

"Only after accepting the mission can I tell you the information about the mission. However, I can tell you a little about it. This new world has not been discovered by other dream masters, and the difficulty level is not that high. The rules of this world's reality are similar to that of ours..."

Feng Xinzi appeared extremely confident and sounded like he was tempting Fang Yuan to join.

"This... I will need a few days to consider. Also, if I am decided, I

would like to accept the mission and receive the reward through the Realm Spirit!"

The Realm Spirit was originally the consciousness of the Kun. After alteration, it became more like a programmed manager of the Dream Realm. Under the scrutiny of all the dream masters, it would be absolutely partial.

With the Realm Spirit as the middleman, it would be a form of assurance. Unless Feng Xinzi and the other dream masters decide to leave the Dream Realm for good and risk being wanted by other dream masters, everything would be fine. Fang Yuan knew that if it was him instead, he would not be important enough to be placed on the wanted list.

"This of course. However, you only have one day to consider! Our set-up in that small world is about to take effect..."

Feng Xinzi continued. "Don't miss this chance!"

...

"Exploring a new world!"

After parting with Feng Xinzi, Fang Yuan came to the rock tablet as he browsed through the glistening missions on it.

As his spiritual will shook, 10 contributions were used up and information started to flood into his mind.

In the vast universe, although Da Qian was huge and strong, it was not the only world to exist.

Within worlds, due to different reasons, there would be secret realms as well.

These secret realms or spiritual lands were only partially developed. In other words, they were new worlds that have yet to mature.

Outside Da Qian, there was a whole new world.

Dream masters have predicted that the formation of worlds was

from the actualised dream worlds of powerful dream masters!

A newly developed world might be covered with dangers. After braving the risks, explorers would be rewarded heavily. However, the new world might also be a desert with no findings, or it might even be a trap, set up to trap visitors.

In conclusion, the risks and rewards would be there. It was all up to the dream master's own confidence.

In history, there were stories of normal dream masters becoming sect masters after exploring one new world.

"There are two ways for dream masters to explore new worlds. The first would be to dream-traverse through 3,000 worlds. Through the temptation of the new worlds, they would cast arrays on it, opening a slit to the new world and allow their soul to enter. This would be the most common way of accessing new worlds. The other way is to bring their actual body into the new world. The requirements are too much and I'm afraid that even Feng Xinzi and his company would not be able to do it yet..."

After reading through a few recordings, Fang Yuan came to a conclusion.

It was worth it to take the risk this time!

It was secondary to earn the contribution points. More importantly, he could gain experience.

After all, if he used the dream-traversing method, even if he died in the new world, it would only be a failed exploration mission and he would at most hurt his spiritual will. He could undergo cultivation and train again!

...

After a day, in the Dream Realm, in a void space.

"This is a space which I have rented from the Realm Spirit using contribution points. It is completely safe and the chances of

success by dream-traversing here would be high!"

Feng Xinzi could seemingly see through Fang Yuan's confusion and added a few more words. "Also... let's welcome our new member! Remember to look for a safe place to hold your physical body. After all, even though we have researched on the rate of time flow in both worlds, accidents might still happen!"

"Don't worry, Brother Feng!"

Fang Yuan followed behind Feng Xinzi. "Since I've decided to join, I would already make the necessary preparations."

"Very well, I'll now introduce to you a few group members!"

Feng Xinzi looked at the centre of the space.

At there, there were two other dream masters waiting.

Seeing Fang Yuan, their voices were skeptical.

"Feng Xinzi, is this the new member which you have found?"

Covered in flames, a man's voice was heard. "He doesn't seem hardy enough!"

"That's right! It is no easy task to explore a new world!"

The other voice was from a lady, which was shrouded in illusionary flower petals.

"This is..."

Fang Yuan looked at the lady as his eyebrows twitched. "White Lotus?!"

"Friends, Brother Fang Yuan is handpicked by me! There is no doubt about his ability and personality!"

Feng Xinzi walked in front of the other two dream masters as he calmly spoke.

Following which, he explained to Fang Yuan. "Come, I'll introduce them to you. This is Venerable Fiery Dragon, and this is Deity Clear Lotus! Are you suspecting that she is related to the

Divine Lotus Cult because of her appearance? Keke... This is a misunderstanding! Although Deity Clear Lotus's Nine Lotus Heart Technique looks similar to the techniques of the Divine Lotus Cult, they have their difference!"

"That is true!"

As Fang Yuan took a closer look, he quickly apologised. "I apologise for my reckless opinion. Please forgive me, Deity!"

"That's alright!"

From the lotus petal, there was a clear voice. "I am already used to it. Every stranger I meet would suspect as well..."

Fang Yuan let out a soft laughter. He was indeed afraid of her because of Meng Lian.

After getting rid of her, he did an in-depth investigation on her, which shocked him.

She was part of one of the two evil dream master sects in Da Qian - the Divine Lotus Cult!

Dream masters were good at instilling feelings in other people. By forming a cult, their influence would grow by many folds. Even in Da Qian Empire, their cult was banned. It was rumoured that the ways they adopted spread their teachings were mysterious and they were able to unknowingly affect Wu Zongs, spiritual knights or even dream masters to work for them.

The Divine Lotus Cult and the Evil Divine Sect were the two evil sects among the dream masters. The small sects which originated from these two larger organisations were countless, and they could be described as the source of evil dream masters in Da Qian.

Although Qing Gui's evil name was well-known, he was only a small figure in his sect and was far from being the leader.

"In reality, we are all part of the Realm Alliance!"

After some thought, Feng Xinzi took the initiative to dissipate his

own pill essence, revealing his true appearance. He was a middle-aged man.

"Realm Alliance?"

"Mm, most of the members are dream masters who do not belong to any sect. By relying on the Dream Realm, these members came together to form an alliance, and even dream masters with sects would be allowed to join. Therefore, the alliance is extremely powerful and there are almost no restrictions to it..."

Feng Xinzi continued. "Other than that, there are good dream master sects like Baize Mountain. This is the main pillar for all dream masters in Da Qian. Finally, there is also a Source Seeking Sect. That sect is mainly made up of a bunch of foolish people who would do anything to search for the source of power for dream masters. Just stay away from them!"

"Of course, dream masters in these 5 organisations don't just stick to one organisation. They can move around!"

Fang Yuan looked down. He knew that if not for his quick thinking, he would be likely taken in by Meng Lian to join the Divine Lotus Sect.

Among these five organisations, the only good one was Baize Mountain. The Realm Alliance was a neutral organisation, and the remaining three were either evil or crazy people. These people would be the ones causing trouble for the entire world.

Chapter 235: Offerings

"Brother Feng, didn't you mention that there would be five of us?"

Fang Yuan looked around.

"Mmm. The last one is not here yet. The technique that she is cultivating is a little special..."

Feng Xinzi was ambiguous.

"Feng Xinzi, don't lie about me in front of our new member!"

As he finished his sentence, a gentle voice was heard, which made Feng Xinzi laughed. "It's just a joke, don't take it to heart!"

Quickly, he turned around and explained to Fang Yuan. "Our fifth member is Yu Tianlao. Her cultivation is in dream spells and the Mastery of Curses..."

"I see!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

The Mastery of Curses was a cultivation related to karma. The techniques would be activated as soon as the curse was spoken, and it was a rare form of cultivation among the dream masters.

Therefore, after seeing a compassionate looking old lady supporting herself with a walking stick, Fang Yuan immediately became serious.

In the Dream Realm, if dream masters were to reveal their true self, they would either be fools or they were confident of their own stills. It seemed like Yu Tianlao belonged to the latter.

Not just him, but even Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus shuddered.

"Keke..... Feng Xinzi, how is your Ten-thousand Pill Cauldron? Are you still trying to produce a pill spirit? It's not that I want to

put you down, but to create life in a cauldron... Difficult! It is extremely difficult!!!"

Yu Tianlao looked at Feng Xingzi and shook her head.

The path to Prominent Divine stage was tough all along. Although this method is extremely difficult, it is my only hope!"

Feng Xinzi's face was one of determination and seemed that he was not afraid of death. "I am already almost there, how can I just give up?"

"Creating life?"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he heard him.

Although the Illusionary Divine stage allowed them to create many things, there was a huge difference between normal objects and spiritual objects, from normal metal to divine troops. All of these were small breakthroughs to be achieved in itself.

However, the jump from producing non-living things to a lifeform was a paramount difference. It was a huge step within the Illusionary Divine stage.

Who would've thought that Feng Xinzi was already at this stage?

Fang Yuan was stunned.

'Of course... After being able to form living things, he would be able to form spiritual beasts and birds, followed by humans with intellectual minds! A dream master at this stage can be known as a 'creator'. This is no longer the elementary Illusionary Divine stage, but the Prominent Divine stage!'

How arduous would it be to cross this stage?

Based on Fang Yuan's predictions, Feng Xinzi was already stuck at this stage for long and had no progress.

'Although I don't know this dream alchemy master's combat skills, his cultivation is already comparable to a dream soldier master forming the Fourth Sword!'

"Keke... Say anything you want, and I hope that your evil mouth loses its life one day!"

Yu Tianlao laughed. "I did not come here today to reminisce about the past. The new world is dangerous. If we lose this chance, we might need to wait for other fools to find another one for us. Feng Xingzi, have you prepared everything?"

"Of course!"

Without hesitation, he exclaimed. "Realm Spirit, I want to seal up my void space!"

"Rumble!"

In the Dream Realm, Fang Yuan felt as though the void space which all of them were in was separated, as though they were travelling through the fabric of spacetime.

With the assurance of the Realm Spirit, there was nowhere safer than where they were right now.

Feng Xinzi quickly took out many spiritual equipment, talismans and blobs of spiritual blood as he started to piece together an array.

Although Fang Yuan was familiar with spiritual arrays, he was still confused at the sight of this particular array.

As for Feng Xinzi, Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus, all three of them seemed to have a deep understanding of this array. Together, they quickly completed the formation of the array.

'Dream masters are indeed talented in many aspects. The longer they live, the more skilled they would be...;

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath after seeing them cast the array.

If the three of them were to disguise themselves as spiritual array masters, they would never be seen through.

"It's done!"

As the finishing touches were completed, Feng Xinzi wiped the sweat off his forehead. Looking at the array which was red, gold and green, he let out an expression of joy. "It is indeed easier to locate the other worlds in the Dream Realm. Next up, we'll have to send out the signal and wait..."

"Cough cough... let me be the one to send out the signal!"

Without consideration for others, Yu Tianlao stood out at took a quick glance at Fang Yuan. "It will be up to you guys to come up with the energy needed to communicate with the other world!"

"This of course!"

Fang Yuan knew that he was here to make up the numbers and therefore could not avoid doing the manual labour.

"Very well. With the five of us, we should have enough dream elemental force!"

Feng Xinzi was ecstatic as he quickly arranged everyone in their positions. The four of us will position ourselves at the corners and try to activate the array inscription. At the beginning, 10 percent of your strength would be enough. Wait for my command!"

"Alright!"

Fang Yuan stood at the position of the White Tiger. As he waved his hands, waves of dream elemental force flowed into the array.

In front of him, talismans started to glow, and the inscriptions on the array started to glitter as the array continued to take in energy.

"Buzz! Buzz!"

At the four corners, each Illusionary Divine stage dream master exerted their dream elemental force. The array inscription started to expand and the three-coloured glow slowly intensified. Suddenly, it shot into the air and started to link up with another world.

"This is it... This is it..."

Yu Tianlao stood in the centre of the array. With her focus, she hardly looked like she was her age. "The Nine Heavens and Ten Earths, execute the divine searching technique! Go!"

As she executed her curse, physical forms of her spoken word appeared and were glowing.

'This is using her spiritual will to locate the worlds. To be able to do this, a dream master must have an exceptional amount of magical energy to link up our Dream Realm to the other world... The curse by Yu Tianlao would increase the chances of success...'

Fang Yuan continued to put in his effort as he slowly recalled the information Feng Xinzi provided to him the moment he agreed to join them.

"That located new world is nicknamed 'Hui' by Feng Xinzi! The Hui Realm!"

"This world is newly discovered and according to Feng Xinzi, the rules of reality which govern that world is similar to the ones which govern Da Qian Empire..."

"The array is only acting as a bait. We will still need to offer sacrifice to the natives in that world... Previously, Feng Xinzi had already disguised himself as an evil spirit to deliver sacrifices to them. Just like fishing, as soon as they become greedy, we can execute our dream-traversing technique at the right time and location. In the future, it would become much more convenient to revisit the world to conduct further explorations..."

"Buzz!"

At this moment, on the array, there was a red glow.

"We have a response! They have initiated the sacrifice!"

Yu Tianlao and Feng Xinzi were beaming. "Start to locate their world! Let's begin!"

In a few seconds, all of them were excited.

...

Hui Realm.

There were two suns in the sky. One was glaring while the other one was dim. Both of them were hanging in the sky, stationary. At night time, both suns would become dimmer. Therefore, the moon in Hui Realm was always a full moon. The land in the realm was divided into many regions.

In the middle laid the Heliocentric Region. It was a vast and scorching desert and there were no signs of life. At the outer extremes laid the Corona Region. The nights were extremely long and it was rare to even have a little sunlight in that region. There were almost no forms of life there as well.

Of course, the natives would call these two regions the 'Death Zones'!

In the middle, where the sunlight was sufficient, a small country was formed and there were finally signs of life.

Within a deserted mansion in Lie Country.

"Are all the sacrifices ready for Deity Feng?"

A wealthy looking middle-aged man asked his subordinates.

His forehead was sticking out and his nose was pointed. His face was flushed and he wore luxurious clothing. At this moment, he continuously rubbed the ring in his fingers as he was deep in his thoughts.

The ring looked normal and therefore felt a little out of place as compared to this man's clothing. However, to him, it seemed as though all the treasures in the world were incomparable to this ring!

Around him, ten over capable subordinates were working hard as they mixed gold and silver ingots together with jade shavings. With all of these, they arranged a huge array on the floor.

Another ten odd-looking objects were placed in the centre of the array. Everything felt weird and out of place, which made many of them confused.

There was a law in Lie Country which states that anyone performing black magic would be killed!

If anyone were to see them and report it to the authorities, everyone there would be killed and their family members would be implicated as well!

However, this middle-aged man remained focused, as though he at an utmost confidence for Deity Feng.

The famous 'Su Guo' was in a daze as he was deep in his thoughts.

Twenty years ago, he was just a small businessman. With some affinity, he managed to obtain a ring. From then on, he became a priest who preached for Deity Feng.

Although he did not know the true purpose of being a priest, this did not stop him from reaping the rewards after a few rounds of sacrifices. It was because of this that his wealth grew.

'Based on what Deity Feng had told me, the few previous instances were only small offerings. This time is the true sacrifice offering! Whatever I will gain will be 10 times more than before! Also, I will gain the technique to extend my lifespan!'

Su Guo's eyes were red.

In terms of wealth, he was already rich enough to start a country. However, the unknown potential of having more power and the path to a longer lifespan was what he was really hoping for.

"Sir, the offerings are here!"

In the middle of a stone platform, a few weird objects of different spiritual auras were placed.

In the centre of all the offerings, there was a green-coloured wood. It was the trunk of a Thousand Year Dragon Tree. In order

to obtain it, Su Guo's caravan suffered deaths of 187 people on the journey there, not to mention the money he had to spend as well.

A red jewel beside the wood was an Aqua Rainbow Coral Jade. It was obtained after the sinking of 30 large vessels and many more divers who died attempting to get it.

...

To put it in another way, only Su Guo who had such wealth was able to collect all these treasures.

"Buzz!"

As the offerings were position in place, the array started to glow.

Su Guo took two steps forward and took in a deep breath. His wish was about to come true!

Chapter 236: Possession

"The mighty Deity Feng... Please descend into our world and realize my dream!"

Dark clouds formed in the sky as lightning ripped across.

It was as though aliens were about to enter the Hui Realm as everything shook.

Within the abandoned mansion, Su Guo felt uneasy. As he looked at the glowing array, his face was flushed. Subconsciously, he took a few steps forward.

Within the array, the few offerings in the middle were slowly consumed by a brightening glow, forming a bright ball of light.

"Buzz!"

As the ball expanded, it slowly formed the shape of a door and shook.

"Rumble!"

At that moment, there was a huge explosion.

As the winds blew, Su Guo flew along with it, defenceless. He rolled along the floor and in the process fractured many of his bones.

Slowly, the abandoned mansion could not withstand the destructive force as well. Amidst the explosion, it collapsed, forming a pile of rubble.

"Rumble! Rumble!"

At that moment, the dark clouds rumbled and streaks of lightning struck down. It was as though the heavens were enraged as thunder roared continuously.

However, there was something weird. As the lightning was about to strike the abandoned mansion, it would swerve and strike

something else.

Amidst the storm, there were multiple light streaks on the roof of the mansion. Slowly, from the light streaks, a dark-coloured door was formed. In an instant, the door opened!

It was as though the gods above were enraged!

As over ten streaks of lightning combined, an extremely thick and huge streak of lightning collectively struck at the top of the black-coloured door!

Su Guo and his subordinates were all unconscious. It was not known if they were still alive or not.

It might be a good thing that they were unconscious.

This was because every form of life in a 100-mile radius was shuddering with fear and sweating profusely as though a disaster was about to happen!

...

The lighting came and went.

Soon after the huge lightning struck, the dark clouds quickly disappeared and the two suns slowly appeared again in the sky. Under the warm glow of the suns, a few white clouds appeared on the horizon. It was a peaceful sight to behold and it was as though the storm was just a dream.

"The backlash did not last too long in this world... d*mn, my leg!"

After a long while, amidst the rubble, a middle-aged man mumbled to himself. "Fortunately, I've bought some spiritual inscriptions to reduce the backlash from traversing through worlds and added them into the array. Otherwise, the consequences would surely be much more serious..."

Although he was wearing a servant's attire, the way he spoke and acted was much different. If someone who knew him was to see him like this, they would give him the title of being 'possessed'.

"This is the... Hui Realm?"

Fang Yuan raised his head and looked at the two suns in the sky, before looking at his own two hands.

The skin of his hands was tight and appeared young. His fingers were full of calluses, which was a sign that he frequently did manual labour.

"It seems like I have possessed a young servants' body. Did he survive the storm because he was too lowly to be near the epicentre of the lightning strike?"

At the moment when the array was completed, the five dream masters in the Dream Realm worked together to bring their soul through space to arrive at the Hui Realm.

However, there was already such a destruction even by simply transporting their souls. Therefore, they had to choose to possess the body's of the natives here and it was up to their luck to see who they possessed.

Compared to the unlucky Feng Xinzi who possessed a person with broken legs, Fang Yuan felt that he was rather fortunate.

"Alright, where are the other three?"

With Fang Yuan's help, Feng Xinzi finally pulled his legs out from the rubble and looked around. "The time of arrival is very short, so they shouldn't be too far from us!"

"We are here!"

As he finished his sentence, he could see the silhouette of two people supporting each other as they walked out from the rubble. Looking at their appearance, it was a male and a female.

"Venerable Fiery Dragon, Deity Clear Lotus!"

Feng Xinzi looked at the man. He was 7 feet tall and was wearing a martial artists' attire. He had a knife around his waist and appeared well-built. He appeared well-skilled in martial arts and

gave off a manly vibe. With a tinge of jealousy, Feng Xinzi complimented. "Brother Fiery Dragon, what fortune!"

"Yeah, sure!"

The lady by the side started to nag. "I am Venerable Fiery Dragon!"

"This..."

Fang Yuan and Feng Xinzi were stunned.

This was the problem of possession. Although their own bodies were extremely strong, there might be a deviation in the traversing of worlds, which might result in such an ending.

Fang Yuan looked at the body which Venerable Fiery Dragon possessed.

It was a lady in her mid-twenties. Her eyes were big and beautiful and her lips were puckered. There was a mole at the corner of her lips and her skin was as smooth as milk. He was a beauty.

Of course, this beauty was now brute and her tone did not match her appearance.

"This is..."

Fang Yuan looked at Feng Xinzi with confusion, and both of them looked at the well-built man in black robes.

"I am Clear Lotus. Greetings to you, my friends!"

The well-built man blushed and bowed.

His girly actions were gentle and graceful and it seemed like he was a graceful lady.

However, since it was a male who was doing it, Fang Yuan and Feng Xinzi both started to have goosebumps.

This was especially so for Feng Xinzi.

Previously, he was still complaining about his leg. However, now, he did not feel like it was a big issue already.

"We cannot change the bodies which we are possessing. If not for the protection of the array, as soon as our souls were to leave these bodies, we would be exposed to the elements..."

Feng Xinzi continued with a serious tone. "You two will have to make do with it. The good thing is that the time we will spend in Hui Realm is... Eh? Did anybody see Elder Lao?"

"I'm here!"

In front, a young and gentle voice was heard. A young girl about the age of 16 walked over with a proud face. "I cannot find anyone suitable around here, and therefore have to make do with this young girl..."

With such a weird combination of appearance and personality, Venerable Fiery Dragon, Deity Clear Lotus and even Fang Yuan felt a little uneasy.

The good thing was that all five of them were dream masters of the Illusionary Divine Stage and all of them had seen enough weird happenings in their lifetimes.

Previously, they were only joking. In a short moment, all of them regrouped and started to discuss the important details.

"This realm is ultimately a new realm. Although we have understood some of the dangers of this realm through Su Guo, we are still uncertain of the exact details. Everybody, please be careful!"

Feng Xinzi reminded everyone.

Even normal dream masters would feel half as powerful if they were to be thrown into a new realm. Only dream masters of the Illusionary Divine stage would have enough evolved dream elemental force to alter reality and remain calm.

Therefore, the minimum requirement for explorers of new worlds was to be at least a dream master of the Illusionary Divine stage!

"This goes without saying!"

Yu Tianlao rolled her eyes. "Your useless friend is still here. Do you want to save him? After all, he is a native and will be of use to us."

"There's no need!"

Feng Xinzi thought to himself for a while before coming to a decision. "He has already broken the law. Even if we save him, he will have bad luck for his whole life and he will be likely to be captured!"

As the person who brought them in, Su Guo was a criminal and his sins were already too much. He would not be able to right his wrongdoings for a few lifetimes to come.

"Although it might seem convenient at first to follow him, we will still have to suffer the consequences of his wrongdoings in time to come and this would implicate us. It is better for us to explore on our own! After our first attempt at possession, we have already integrated with their realm. Unless the bodies which we are possessing dies, revealing our soul, nobody in this realm would realise what had happened!"

Feng Xinzi looked at Fang Yuan and reminded him once more. "Even if our souls are left here, it is not death for us. However, we would still be severely drained on our original bodies. Furthermore, if we are captured or killed too many times, we might integrate completely with this realm and experience its backlash. Therefore... take care and be careful! Most importantly, if met with danger, we can lose the body and even let it die, but we cannot let our souls get captured!"

"I know this!"

Fang Yuan was appreciative of Feng Xinzi's friendly reminder and nodded his head to show his agreement.

"Alright! Every array can only transport 5 souls through. Now,

we have time to explore the Hui Realm!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus looked at each other. "Let's split up and explore. After three months, we'll meet up and discuss our findings together. How does that sound?"

Seeing their confidence, Fang Yuan could guess that the few of them had already obtained information from Su Guo regarding the realm and roughly knew what they wanted to do.

"Mm... I'm fine with this plan. Furthermore, I have some other private issues to settle. What are your thoughts on this, Elder Lao?"

Feng Xinzi looked at Yu Tianlao.

"To search base on our own affinity. This is fair!"

Yu Tianlao nodded her head. However, her voice was deep, which made Fang Yuan glance at her with confusion.

Seeing that Yu Tianlao had realised that he was glancing at her, Fang Yuan rubbed his nose. "I am not seeking for anything to gain. I only intend to walk around and understand the happenings in this world!"

"Mm. Regardless, just remember to meet after three months!"

Feng Xinzi nodded his head and looked at the surroundings. "We cannot stay long here. Let's take our leave. Remember to prioritise safety and make sure not to be captured by the powerful people in this realm!"

Such a commotion at the abandoned mansion would surely attract a lot of attention.

Fang Yuan knew that Su Guo's life was over.

Without thinking too much about him, Fang Yuan picked a direction to walk in and was on his way.

"Mm... This physical body is not cultivated. It seems that I must slowly train it. Although I have the experience to achieve

breakthroughs, it is still extremely troublesome to train up this body, regardless if I am able to use my power of Illusionary Divine!"

In a short moment, he had turned into a small path.

After a while, Fang Yuan stopped and looked behind. "Elder Lao, why are you following me?"

"Hehe!"

As a shadow flashed by, Yu Tianlao appeared. She had two ponytails on her head and she twirled it around in her fingers. "Feng Xinzi and the rest have decided on what to do and abandoned you by yourself. Young man, do you want to work with Elder Lao?"

"It's alright!"

Fang Yuan's objective was to gather more experience and explore on his own. After all, he still had to contribute his findings after three months and was not interested in gaining anything else. Therefore, he outrightly rejected her.

Chapter 237: Fixed Stats

"Is that so... What a pity! I know of a good place and wanted to bring you there to give you more experience. It seems you are unappreciative!"

The young girl which Yu Tianlao had possessed shook her head and turned around.

Although she was possessing a normal person, there was fog all around her. In a flash, she disappeared.

'Using dream elemental force to strengthen your body?'

Witnessing this scene, Fang Yuan mumbled to himself but did not put it to heart. "Bring me along to give me more experience? I'm afraid you just want to kill me, right?"

He scanned his surroundings with his spiritual will. After assuring himself that no one was following him, he executed his lightness skill and quickly disappeared.

Just as the five of them took their leave, a group of people rode horses and arrived at the scene of destruction. They sealed the entire place and the region was in a chaos...

...

"Whoosh!"

The river was flowing.

Fang Yuan stood at the river bank and looked at his own reflection.

He was a pale looking young man with long eyebrows, and there was a hint of strength in his eyes.

"I'm rather lucky. At least I am stronger than the three of them..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head and waved his hands.

"Buzz!"

Dream elemental force appeared on his palms.

"Dream masters in the Illusionary Divine stage have the ability to alter reality. Although it is still effective in this world, the consumption of dream elemental force is much higher than before. I'll have to use it carefully."

After a few rounds of experimentation, Fang Yuan finally understood.

The physical body which he possessed was a normal young man which was average.

Furthermore, his soul was average as well. Without the strength from his Mind Palace, he was using up the stored dream elemental force in his actualised dream world, and there was no way to replenish it.

"I must quickly strengthen this body!"

After coming to a conclusion, Fang Yuan began to try out something new.

He picked up a green-coloured rock.

This rock was from the river bank and was from the river bank. It even had a layer of moss on it.

In a moment, a bewildering glow glittered from his hands. Around the rock, the air started to vibrate and finally, the rock exploded.

"Whoosh!"

The green rock became a powdery mess and was blown by the wind.

In his actualised dream world, the 8 Gates Sword Array shook and the Fire Sword shimmered, but nothing else happened.

"I failed... is this due to the fact that the realms are separated?"

Just previously, Fang Yuan had attempted to transfer an object from the Hui Realm into his actualised dream world.

If it was possible, he would have discovered a new way to store things as well as transfer objects from the Hui Realm to Da Qian.

However, his plan had failed from the start.

"In Da Qian Empire, dream masters in the Illusionary Divine stage can link themselves to the Dream Realm through their actualised dream world and only consume a little dream elemental force, transferring objects from one place to another in an instant. However, this is not possible here..."

Fang Yuan thought about it. He realised that even though he could still communicate with his actualised dream world, it felt distant and separated from him.

"After all, we are separated by an entire realm. It is possible to transfer energy but not objects. However, this might be possible if my actual physical body is here!"

He shook his head as he concluded that his plan to transfer treasures from Hui Realm to Da Qian was down the drain.

"Something's not right!"

Fang Yuan was a smart person and could quickly pick out the discrepancy. "If there was nothing to be gained, Feng Xinzi and the rest would not want to come here! Or... what they are planning to get their hands on is not something with a physical form and is able to be transported through their souls?"

As he thought down this train of thoughts, he felt that everything was much more logical.

He knocked his head and could roughly guess the plans of these few dream masters.

"They can get what they want, I'll just care for myself..."

Looking at his powerless hands, he gave off a bitter laugh. "Give

me my stats!"

"Whoosh!"

In front of him, a window appeared. Information flooded the window, which surprised him.

"I was only testing! Who would know that this would work!"

Fang Yuan smiled. "It seems that this trait is something that is tied to my soul!"

As he changed a physical body, there were extreme changes to his stats as well:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 0.9 (36)

Spirit: 0.8 (30)

Magic: 1.1 (21)

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: [Illusionary Divine (???)], Wu Zong (???)

Technique: [8 Gates Sword Array (First Sword) (10%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

Looking at his own stats, Fang Yuan was speechless.

This body which he was in was the same as his own stats before he had started to train in martial arts while he was in the secluded valley.

Most of his techniques were wiped off. Only the 8 Gates Sword Array, which was related to his actualised dream world, remained.

As for his skills, he was surprised to see that they were perfectly preserved, even the levels of the skills.

"The bodies possessed by other dream masters should be similar to mine. However, they have the advantage of retaining their techniques in their actualised dream world, which means they

would have a head start to strengthen their bodies!"

Based on his predictions, the other 4 of them would now be in hiding and attempting to train up their body, or they might even use evil spells to strengthen their body's strength.

If they did not recover at least half of what they use to have, they could do little.

After all, how could there be no highly skilled people in such a big world?

If they could die even in hiding then it would be a big joke.

"What do this original stats mean?"

Fang Yuan looked at the numbers in the brackets and stroked his chin.

As his mind focused on the numbers in the brackets, a mysterious piece of information was revealed, which allowed him to understand everything.

"Fixed stats? This would mean that... regardless of which body I am in, I would retain the maximum skill of what I have? This would be true even for reincarnation..."

"If this is true, then I would not have the problem of being stuck at bottlenecks anymore, but..."

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and started to execute his Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique.

"Whoooo!"

The winds blew.

The muscles on his body started to vibrate and the shriek of an eagle was heard.

In his stats window, the originally absent Giant Eagle Metal Body technique started to reappear.

"Crack!"

Popping sounds were heard from his body as his joints cracked.

"The rules of reality which govern this world is similar to that of Da Qian. Therefore, the basics of training in martial arts should be similar as well. I just need to adapt a little..."

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and stuck his five fingers out in the shape of an eagle claw. Slowly, he experienced the little differences in this realm as he executed the technique.

"The 12 Golden Gates - Initial Gate, Rest Gate, Life Gate, Restriction Gate, View Gate, Pain Gate, Shock Gate, Death Gate... Open!!!"

At that moment, 8 loud sounds were heard. The energy in his body fused and started to form inner power. Slowly, the inner power came together to form a wire-like inner force.

"The Hui Realm is a little different from Da Qian. There are no Yin, Yang, Earth and Heaven Gates in the 4 Heavenly Gates. Instead, there are only two steps to form and obtain elemental force!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Behind Fang Yuan, a giant metallic eagle silhouette appeared.

"The realm of elemental force... breakthrough!"

Fang Yuan was decisive. In a moment, he took in elemental energy from Heaven and Earth into his Dantian, forming the martial artists' elemental force.

Finally, the Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique in his stats window started to settle down.

"This speed..."

Seeing that his Essence was already half of what he used to have and looking at his hands, Fang Yuan was in disbelief.

"How can I so simply recover my cultivation as a Wu Zong? Does this mean that I only need a day's work to get back my full

potential?"

Fang Yuan finally understood.

If normal people training in martial arts was compared to a tortoise crawling, then the method which he just used would be akin to cheating and running at full speed!

Even if the dream masters were to lose their ability, they could harness the ability to actualise in their souls to cheat and give themselves a headstart to recover their abilities.

What a headstart for him!

"Fixed stats! This means that no matter how many times I change my physical body, if given time, I would be able to recover my abilities to its fullest potential!"

Fang Yuan clenched his fists and his eyes glittered.

This ability was a comforting one to him.

After all, the highest level of mission in the Dream Realm would be exploration missions!

Even dream masters in the Illusionary Divine stage still would not have the ability to transport their physical body to the new worlds, and therefore it would be common to perform possession on the natives in the world to be explored.

Other dream masters would need one to two months to recover all their strength. However, with the help of fixed stats, Fang Yuan could achieve it in a moment. What a difference!

"The difference in our abilities would mean that I have more time to explore the secrets of this world and reap more benefits from it!"

Fang Yuan glanced at his own stats window and realised a big change:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 12 (36)

Spirit: 12 (30)

Magic: 8 (21)

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: [Illusionary Divine (???)], Wu Zong

Technique: [8 Gates Sword Array (First Sword) (10%)], Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"My stats window has retained the peak of my abilities. Regardless of any changes, I would be able to recover those abilities extremely quickly..."

Fang Yuan clenched his fists. "Alright, let's recover everything then!"

At this point, his expression changed. As he looked behind, his face appeared serious.

Amidst the ruffling of robes, black shadows appeared in the forest and appeared to be surrounding him.

"That's quick... Wait, how did they find me?"

Fang Yuan was desolate. "The only possibility is that one of them betrayed me. Or should I say, use me as a bait to distract these people away from them to get more time to escape..."

Using his spiritual will to scan, he found something amiss.

Underneath his clothing, there were a few strands of hair. There were so light that he did not even feel them there.

"Keke..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and picked up the strands of hair. "With the loss of my cultivation as a Wu Zong, I even failed to keep my guard up and detect this..."

If the chasing soldiers were to arrive a moment earlier, they would surely give him a lot of trouble, which would make him use

up a lot of his remaining dream elemental force to take all of them down. This would slow his progress in recovering his abilities.

But now?

Looking at the soldiers approaching, he appeared mysterious. "Very well... I was still worrying about how I should go about to deepen my understanding of this world, and here all of you come!"

Chapter 238: Zodiac

"The demon who did black magic is in front!"

In the forest, a group of soldiers were chasing Fang Yuan and their expressions appeared solemn.

They were wearing uniforms and it appeared that they were from a single organisation.

At this point in time, a small-eyed man next to the leader twitched his nose.

"Whoosh!"

As a yellow glow emerged, his nose started to change. Facial hair started to grow on both sides of his face, which appeared a little yellowish.

After a deep breath, he came to a decision.

"Very well, let's split!"

The leader of all of them was a young man wearing a bamboo-woven crown. He was wearing long silk robes with an image of a cockerel sewn on it and a pair of cloth shoes. Although he appeared young, his actions seemed matured and he seemed to have a lot of influence.

"Yes, sir!"

Behind him, a few groups started to split and approached the river.

While they were splitting up, behind every leader of each group was a dim glow which took the shape of a tiger or leopard. With this, their speed in the forest increased.

"Great! With Shinto, I'm afraid he won't be able to escape!"

Everyone looked jubilant.

"Hmph! We cannot find any evidence at the site where Su Guo

had cast his black magic. This time, with the help of the mountain gods, we might be able to get some leads!"

The young man let out a laugh.

"Sir... We cannot control the gods. Please mind your words!"

The few of them beside him twitched a little.

The presence of the gods in the mountains must be related to the supernatural event. This young man was the envoy of the capital of Lie Country. He was not afraid of anything. After all, he had to lead the country in the presence of the gods above him. How would he dare to be disrespectful?

"Heh..."

The young man was extremely quick, but a little impatient. "We have already investigated that Su Guo must have used illegal means to build his wealth. We wanted to capture him as soon as he was rich enough. Who would know that Deity Feng... Hehe, that deity is most likely an evil one!"

"With such a thing happening, someone must be held responsible and accountable for this. This is my chance to perform!"

Nonetheless, he would not put all his resources here just to capture Su Guo.

"We see him!"

As the soldiers spoke, they continued making their way through the forest. As they arrived at the river, a silhouette of a young man was seen.

The young man was wearing a servant's uniform and appeared to be one of Su Guo's subordinates. He was standing in the middle as the soldiers started to surround him.

"I am Qin Yi, the Silver Badged Envoy of the Six Gates of Lie Country. Surrender!"

Qin Yi leapt towards the young man and exclaimed. It was a sight

to behold.

After all, he was on the good side and the young man was the bad guy! It was only logical for him to take the young man down!

After all, the bad people would naturally be a little more cowardly and wouldn't dare to go against a government's official, right?

With such a pressure from Qin Yi, the young man would surely be unable to even use half of his original power. Therefore, he was at an advantage.

"Whoooo!"

As his claws struck towards the young man, a white glow appeared behind which quickly transfigured into the shape of a huge tiger. With such a ferocious strike, the atmosphere was tense.

"Hmmm... is this how energy is being used in the Hui Realm? Interesting!"

Fang Yuan smiled as he looked at Qin Yi.

Although there was martial arts and spiritual spells in the Hui Realm, it was not common.

In this realm, the popular practice was through Shinto combined with royal energy to form a unique relationship.

Those in a position of power would be designated the mountain gods and water gods. They would have spirits protecting them wherever they go. Even lowly officials and citizens were allowed to absorb spiritual objects and harness their abilities based on their zodiacs.

Take for instance, Qin Yi. He was born with the attributes of a white tiger, with his zodiac being the tiger. With his cultivation in a Hundred Year Spiritual Tiger Palm and strength from the royal energy, he was able to form the shape of a tiger. It was impressive and even comparable to a 4 Heavenly Gates martial artist!

In contrast, the poor and lowly people had to train hard and cultivate in martial arts and spiritual spells. They would take a very long time to reach a certain cultivation level.

Qin Yi was only 20. Born with a silver spoon and a high status in the government, he was comparable to a 12th Gate martial artist at his peak. He would still be considered a talent in Da Qian.

With his tiger claw, the people around witnessing it were all doubtful that Fang Yuan could escape from it. Afterwards, it would be the routine capturing and questioning.

"The spirit of a tiger? Spiritual technique? Martial arts? Interesting! Really interesting!"

Fang Yuan raised his right fist and countered his claw.

"Bang!"

His fist was ordinary-looking and there was no white tiger behind him. It was incomparable to Qin Yi's tiger claw.

However, after a loud bang, Qin Yi exclaimed as his right arm shattered. He flew backwards.

"Aw! Aw!"

Behind him, the spirit of the white tiger was making noises as though it wanted to protect its owner.

"What the hell is this?"

Fang Yuan looked at all of them as though they were not worth his time. "Get... lost!"

"Rumble!"

As the energy in him surged, his temperature rose and his blood gushed around in his veins. From him, there was the sound of a huge river gushing its way downstream and he was like a human furnace.

As he shouted, the white tiger exclaimed and exploded into

sparkles.

"What... what the hell!"

The soldiers around were stunned."

A punch and a shout were all it needed to defeat the envoy from the Six Gates, the reincarnation of the white tiger, Qin Yi?

And the person who defeated him was a small servant?

Illusion! It must be an illusion!

"This is impossible..."

Qin Yi laid on the floor and shouted with embarrassment. "You are using... martial arts?! How is this possible?"

In this realm, it was a hard and tedious process to cultivate in martial arts. Therefore, it was always being belittled. Even though there were a few people who were at the cultivation level of sect masters, Qin Yi did not put a single one of them to heart.

This was until he met Fang Yuan!

After a punch, he was sure that he did not harness the strength of his zodiac!

If he did, they could suppress his zodiac's strength with the help of the Mountain God.

A simple fist without drawing strength from external sources gave him a new understanding.

Even the simplest martial arts could be so powerful!

Unfortunately, Fang Yuan could not understand a single word he was saying.

By looking at his expression, Fang Yuan could still understand what was going through in his mind.

"Ah... I knew it. It is troublesome to bridge the language barrier. Fortunately..... I have you guys!"

Fang Yuan looked around and smiled.

"Get up!"

Seeing their envoy on the ground, the soldiers were a little afraid. However, they still obeyed and got to their feet.

Not just that, the array which they formed was glowing. It was able to harness strength from the heavens and earth, which resembled elemental force a little.

"No... Rather than describing it as elemental force, I should call it miniature elemental force! This is because they can only draw strength from this forest!!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

The difference between elemental force and miniature elemental force was the difference between an 11th Gate martial artist and a Wu Zong!

Therefore, after gathering his elemental force, he struck another punch out.

"Rumble!"

As the air exploded, a wave of heat spread.

The trees and grass fell. Even a layer of the ground was shaved off as dust flew about.

As everything settled down, there was a pile of unconscious soldiers lying about.

"What did you do? Don't come over..."

Seeing Fang Yuan approaching him, Qin Yi slowly crawled backwards and appeared flustered. "I knew it... you are not human! You are being possessed by that evil Deity Feng!"

"What I pity! I don't understand a single word you are saying!"

With a face of regret, Fang Yuan shook his head. Swiftly, he struck Qin Yi, making him unconscious. With his right index

finger, he pointed in between Qin Yi's eyebrows.

"Dream accessing!"

The dream lasted for 10,000 years.

Within moments, Fang Yuan witnessed Qin Yi's life from a 3rd person's perspective.

From his innocent days while he was a child to his discovery of his zodiac sign, then to his smooth career in the government's office into the Six Gates. Finally, vices consumed him as his personality changed.

Fang Yuan's motive was to learn the language of the Hui Realm.

Along the way, he learnt about the zodiacs, gods and royal energy.

"The zodiac of a white tiger would allow him to train a Spiritual Tiger Palm?"

In the Hui Realm, Fang Yuan opened his eyes and looked at Qin Yi's claws.

Indeed, the bones in his arms were thicker than normal.

"Unfortunately... the path of the zodiacs is too reliant on external strength!"

Fang Yuan shook his head. Looking at Qin Yi's personality, even a martial artist of 4 Heavenly Gates from Da Qian would be able to defeat him easily.

"Regardless, it is still a quick way to cultivate such power. Compared to martial arts which would require patience and a lot of hard work, this path would surely be more attractive, especially for the people of higher status with access to the royal energy!"

It was best to be able to control one's own strength and power independently.

The cultivation on the path of zodiac would require a lot of

resources and the approval from the royal family. Additionally, through Shinto, cultivation on the path of zodiac was the preferred choice over cultivating in martial arts and spiritual spells.

"Zodiacs are the heart of how energy is transferred in the Hui Realm. It is through the combination of the royal energy. Without these sources of energy, one would lose their strength. This would be a good way to have control over the cultivators."

"Qin Yi was young and was even a Silver Badge Constable. His status is still considered low and therefore the help he had was limited! He should be around the same status as a 7th Grade official... If it was a 1st Grade official in the Lie Country, with the combination of their zodiacs, he would surely be able to obtain elemental force or even achieve the Elemental Opening Realm!"

"Other than self-cultivation, there is another path of cultivation in Hui Realm! That is Shinto! To be accepted by the gods, the person would have to submit himself to the royal family. Otherwise, it would be classified under the worship of evil gods and he would be captured!"

...

As his thoughts whirred in his mind, Fang Yuan scanned the peaceful forest and scoffed.

"You stalked me before and now you help them secretly. Do you think you can hide from me? Mountain God, come out! Do you want to force me to burn down this place?"

"Aww!"

Within seconds, there was a change in the forest.

Eyes appeared amidst the vegetation. It was a pack of wolves.

With the appearance of the wolves, other animals began to appear as well. All of them remained silent and appeared in an orderly fashion, which makes the entire scene creepy.

"Oh?"

Seeing the animals, Fang Yuan shook his head. "It seems that there is a huge difference in power between the good and evil. Are you only capable of this, Mountain God?"

Chapter 239: Realm Energy

The strength of Shinto would gradually grow and they would control a certain area.

Fang Yuan was clear of this.

Take for instance the Mountain God. If it were to pay attention, it would be able to know everything that happened within the Zhuobie Mountain. It could even transfer its strength and assist government officials who were within Zhuobie Mountain. This was seen in the increased strength of the array formed by the soldiers previously. If the Mountain God did not help in the dark, the array would not have been so strong as to harness miniature elemental force.

Furthermore, it would know about all the treasures in the mountain. All animals would have to listen to its orders and its power was limitless.

However, it was still weak.

After all, it was considered a Yin Spirit. It would be difficult for it to be exposed in the realm for long. Of course, as a god, it could still temporarily break these constraints.

Wouldn't it be giving itself away by revealing itself in front of Fang Yuan?

Therefore, it could only play a supporting role and incite the animals within the mountains without showing itself.

"Not just that... for such a god to continue existing, it would require approval from the royal family. With the high casualty rate of government officials every year and the lack of government positions, it would be hard to strike a balance between this two. Therefore, in Shinto, the competition is tough... This is seen between the Mountain God in Zhuobie Mountain and Chenghuang God."

Fang Yuan had freshly obtained these pieces of information from Qin Yi's memories through dream accessing.

"The Mountain God of Zhuobie Mountain was a 1st official in its past life and had led a respectable life. Furthermore, his disciples were all capable. This was why it had gained approval from the royal family... Interestingly, this had happened hundreds of years ago..."

Seeing an army formed by the animals, Fang Yuan fiddled with a blood-red sword essence and sighed. "What a pity... I don't want to live such a life!"

"Whoosh!"

In his actualised dream world, the vague imagery of the 8 Gates Sword Array shook, and the fire sword glowed brilliantly.

"Whoosh!"

In a moment, a red sword essence exploded around Fang Yuan like raindrops.

"Chi! Chi!"

As blood splattered around, shrieks from the animals were heard amidst a fiery glow!

Even though Fang Yuan had yet to actualise the complete fire-type divine troops, just the sword essence was enough to hurt an adversary as strong as a Wu Zong!

As the illusionary swords flew out, animals and vegetation alike were caught in a burning inferno.

This fire was not normal fire but spiritual fire. There were sparkles within the blood-red sword essence. As the essence spread, flames broke out everywhere.

In the burning inferno, there was a weak cry. Within moments, it was no longer heard.

"Is it really so weak?"

Although he knew that Shinto was weak, he was a little confused after personally experiencing itself.

There was an illusionary red sword in his hands. Dragons were carved on the sword's handle and there was a greenish hue to it. It was translucent and extremely similar to the one he had in his actualised dream world.

"I was saving this sword for the god. Who knew that it would be so useless..."

Fang Yuan shook his head, turned around and disappeared into the horizon.

After half a day, government officials finally rushed their way here. All of them were left speechless.

...

"It is impossible for Feng Xinzi and company to take any treasures from the Hui Realm..."

Leaving Zhuobie Mountain, he quickly regained his strength as he started to think to himself.

"Even the unique techniques here can only be studied upon but not brought back as the two worlds are ultimately different... Unless a specific treasure can be made illusionary and taken into their souls to be brought back... If that is so, there is only one such thing! Realm energy!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

To dream masters, anything physical would be a burden. Only treasures which were illusionary were worth keeping!

Realm energy would fulfil this criterion!

"Based on the description of Hui Realm, there is realm energy between Heaven and Earth. It is the source of everything. In a country, there is a country's realm energy. In the wilderness, there are spiritual realm energies and earth realm energies! A country

would depend on its country's realm energy in order to transfer energy to government officials to strengthen them. However, Huangchengs Gods, Mountain Gods and River Gods would need to rely on realm energies to survive..."

"Most importantly, if the realm energy can be absorbed, then it can be brought along with the soul!"

If Feng Xinzi and the rest didn't have any other motives, this would be the most probable conclusion.

With this guess, Fang Yuan knew what he had to do.

After two days.

On a green rock, energy surged around Fang Yuan. Three spiritual meridians formed on his body. He had recovered all the cultivation he had in Da Qian.

"Indeed... my unique ability would allow me to quickly recover my cultivation regardless of the physical body I am in."

He stood up and looked at his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 21

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: Illusionary Divine (1st Tier), Wu Zong (3rd Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 4) (1%)], Hundred Poison Golden Body (1st Refining), [8 Gates Sword Array (1st Sword) (10%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

As he fidgeted, the joints in his body started to crack loudly.

"Finally, I've recovered all my abilities. It's suffocating to feel

bound for so long!"

Fang Yuan had a premonition that this unique ability of his would bring him far in the future!

"Considering their affluence, Fang Xinzi and company would surely not go after the small realm energies!"

"This would leave them with the bigger mountains and rivers with concentrated earth realm energies. If they can absorb those realm energies into their soul, they would be able to bring it back to Da Qian as a form of... resource for cultivation?"

Fang Yuan started to think deeper. "If I had known, I shouldn't have killed the Mountain God, but captured it and do some research on it!"

Based on his cultivation, he was qualified enough to seal the Mountain God's realm energy but lacked the technique to go about doing it.

After all, this was the first time that Feng Xinzi had asked him to come along. Why would he share his knowledge without reservations?

"Luckily, three months is a long time. I have all the opportunities to try!"

Fang Yuan gazed into the sky and appeared deep in thought.

...

Golden Dragon Lake.

This was the biggest lake in Lie Country and stretched across a few counties. By leveraging on transport over the lake, people had a good chance of survival by settling around the lake.

Of course, the most famous thing about the lake was the Water God, Golden Dragon God!

This God was famous since a long time ago. It was approved by the previous royal family and had a lot of experience. By

harnessing the realm energy from the huge lake, it survived the previous wars which led to the uprising of Lie Country.

In the growing years of the country, the country had sent envoys to check on the lake. The Golden Dragon God was still powerful and could reveal itself even in broad daylight. Therefore, it was still approved but in fact, it was the country's attempt to establish good relations with it.

"This god is one of the elders in Shinto!"

It seemed to Fang Yuan that by riding to the country's realm energy, the king of Lie Country had resorted to killing the low-levelled gods like Huangcheng God.

However, ancient gods such as the Golden Dragons God, who harnessed middle-tier realm energy, could defend itself. Therefore, it was not worth the effort of the country to kill it.

Therefore, the Golden Dragon God was a strong god among the Shintos in Lie Country. It was not only an elder but was the leader of a group of Water Gods and was rather influential.

With a target, Fang Yuan executed his lightness skill and rushed his way through a road which was less populated by the natives. As he neared the boundaries of Golden Dragon Lake, he slowed down.

After three days, he crossed a mountain peak and arrived at a pier.

"Storm Pier?"

Looking at an old-fashioned wooden sign, he walked towards a jetty. "Is this Changliu River? I want to hire a boat to bring me to Golden Dragon Lake!"

He was speaking the official language of Lie Country, the language which Qin Yi spoke. He even had their accent.

The fishermen around looked at him. "Young man, do you want to go to Golden Dragon Lake? It is a two-day journey and will cost

you 20 coins!"

The coins in Lie Country were shaped like tiny knives, and there was a tiny hole at the end of the knives, to provide convenience by allowing it to be strung together.

Fang Yuan took out 20 knife-looking coins. These were contributions from the soldiers he had killed and were new and shiny looking.

"Young man, you are indeed from the capital! What generosity!"

The new coins were limited in production and were worth two old coins. As the fishermen looked at the coins, their eyes glittered.

As they exchanged glances, an old fisherman walked out. "If you don't mind, take my boat!"

"Oh, you are..."

Fang Yuan examined him. The fisherman was in his 40s. However, due to the fact that he was physically strained, his hair was white and he looked older than his age. His fingers were rough and seemed strong, giving him the appearance of a good coxswain.

"What is your name? Call me Yu Da!"

Old Yu chuckled to himself as he brought Fang Yuan to an old-looking boat which looked sturdy. He weighed the anchor, opened the sails and sailed out of the harbour. He seemed extremely familiar with what he was doing.

"Eh? Have you awaken your zodiac?"

As Fang Yuan squinted his eyes, he could see that there was a shroud of water-type energy around Yu Da's body, making him look like a black fish.

"You are right! My zodiac is a black carp and I was fortunate enough to absorb a black carp's scale in my younger days. It didn't help me much except to allow me to swim better and feel the water better..."

Yu Da laughed to himself.

Considering the fact that he was not gifted and had no backing, it was already rather impressive for him to reach such a stage.

Even so, without assistance from the government, it would be extremely hard for him to achieve a breakthrough. He was only a tad bit stronger than the average human.

The boat sailed in the direction of the stream which made it rather fast. Fang Yuan casually engaged in a conversation with Yu Da.

"Why are you going to Golden Dragon Lake?"

"To pray to the gods!"

"I see!"

Yu Da pushed his chest out proudly. "Our Golden Dragon God is the most responsive! That is..."

As he continued, his face started to appear solemn and remained speechless as he stared at the surface of the water.

'The gods under him often bring trouble to the people...'

Fang Yuan thought to himself. 'This is already nearing the region of Golden Dragon Lake. Of course you wouldn't dare to speak your mind...'

Chapter 240: Uncle River

There were monkey shrieks from both sides of the river bank, as the boat sailed through the mountains.

It took only a day before the surroundings around the boat started to change drastically.

The mountainous ridge became shorter and shorter and finally, it became a flat ground.

Changliu River became wider and wider and could no longer be called a river, for it resembled something more like a channel.

"Where is this?"

Looking at the scenery on both sides, Fang Yuan enquired.

"This is Golden Sun City, and the river we are on is called the Golden Dragon River. We are not far from Golden Dragon Lake now..."

Yu Da chuckled.

"This area doesn't seem to be very peaceful..."

Fang Yuan pointed to the riverbank.

"That is..."

As Yu Da looked over, his expression changed.

There was a group of people crowding around the riverbank. They seemed to be praying and there were occasional crying sounds.

A young lady who was dressed up was being sent into the river on a wooden raft.

The raft was not sturdy. If it were to reach the centre of the river, under the pressure from the surging river, it would surely break apart. By then, the young girl on the raft would likely become a meal for the fishes.

Of course, if her soul was captured in the process, it would be worse.

"Praying to Uncle River?"

Yu Da was pale. "What a sin... If I knew that something like this would happen, I wouldn't have sailed on this boat. What if we anger the Dragon King?"

He whispered the words 'sin'. If not for Fang Yuan's strong hearing ability, he would have missed out as well.

"Praying to Uncle River?"

Fang Yuan made a shocked expression. "Isn't Uncle River a god? Why do they need to offer him sacrifices? To make matters worse, the worst form of sacrifice, a human being?"

"This practice of Uncle River's Marriage dated back to a long time ago. However, this year's ceremony is already over. It seems like something bad had happened on the river, otherwise they wouldn't resort to this..."

Yu Da sighed.

Helplessly, their boat drifted close to the river bank, allowing them to witness everything clearly.

On the shore, incense were lighted and paper offerings were drifting about in the sky. A few sorceresses were performing a ritual.

As the moment arrived, the young lady was wailing as the raft she was on was being pushed out to the river.

"Let's wait it out. If we continue our journey now, it is disrespectful to Uncle River!"

Witnessing this scene, Yu Da refused to budge.

Not just that, he also started to kowtow on his boat. "Dragon King, we have no ill intentions, please forgive us! Please forgive us!"

"Really..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and was speechless. Looking at the river surface, he could clearly see the silhouette of the lady on the rafts.

She was around 18. Even with makeup on, she had a childish look on her face. Although she was not crying, her eyes were filled with tears as she looked over to a couple in despair.

"Kacha! Kacha!"

The raft was already built to break down under pressure. Now that it had arrived in the middle of the river, it started to break apart.

A dark shadow was formed directly under the river. It was mysterious-looking which made the young lady shudder in fear.

"Is this offering ceremony an annual thing?"

Witnessing this scene, Fang Yuan gave a look of displeasure.

"Once a year would be the minimum. If there were any natural disasters, they would perform it again... What are you doing?"

Yu Da was explaining casually about the ritual. However, as soon as he saw Fang Yuan leaping into the water, he was stunned.

"What am I doing?"

Fang Yuan smiled.

Fang Yuan's legs were firmly planted onto the water surface and remained unmoved as the waves swept across. "To save someone, naturally!"

Although he planned to find trouble for the Golden Dragon God, it was still a good thing to save someone.

"Save... save... someone!"

From the moment Yu Da saw Fang Yuan standing on the water surface, he knew that he was someone special. As he was holding

in his shock, he stuttered.

He was filled with regret! Just because he wanted to earn some money, he infuriated the Water Gods! How could he ever think of working here next time?

If the heavens would give him another chance, he would surely not do business with Fang Yuan/

Unfortunately, there was no such thing as a second chance.

As Yu Da looked across the water, he could see Fang Yuan strutting towards the raft. "Young lady... what is your name?"

"I..."

The young lady was stunned. "I'm Ling'er!"

As a final wave crashed into the raft, it shattered into many pieces.

"Come! Grab hold of my hand!"

Fang Yuan stretched out his hand. "Do you want to be fed to the fishes?"

"Whoosh!"

At this moment, another wave struck.

Amidst the screaming of the young lady, Fang Yuan could feel an icy cold hand grabbing on to his own arm.

"Very well, it seems that you still want to live!"

Fang Yuan did not bring the girl back to the river bank.

After all, from their stupidity, even if the young lady were to return, she would surely be sent out as sacrifice again.

Furthermore, by saving the young lady, Fang Yuan angered the spirits in the water.

"Whoosh!"

Seeing that their offering was being snatched away in front of

their eyes, the shadows under the water were enraged. They started to send tsunamis on the water surface. Suddenly, there was a whirlpool in the middle of the river which slowly grew in size, drawing Fang Yuan in.

"You are as insignificant as a grain of rice, and yet you dare to glitter like a pearl?"

Fang Yuan snickered and flicked his finger.

"Whoosh!"

A red-coloured sword essence appeared in struck the bottom of the river.

Although his fire-type sword essence was being restrained by the water, it was still nonetheless destructive.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

The shadow beneath them shook. Slowly, bubbles began to emerge from below, followed by a huge black fish that was 8 inches long. With its belly facing the sky, there was a huge hole in it where blood was flowing out from.

"Indeed a spirit... However, based on the perspective of the people in this realm, it should be a spiritual animal, right?!"

Fang Yuan took a quick glance at Yu Da.

If he did not lie, then his cultivation could begin from the moment he took in the scale from a black carp.

Indeed, after seeing this huge fish, Yu Da appeared uneasy.

By the looks of it, he would be considered mentally strong if he did not faint after seeing the dead fish.

"It... is dead? Is this... Uncle River?"

Ling'er was stuttering but could still be understood.

"Uncle River? Lady... you think too much! It is just an animal!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes and waved his hand.

"Chi!"

On the river surface, it was as though another sun appeared.

The continuously burning fire-type sword essence was like an arrow as it shot down into the water.

Blood spread everywhere on the surface of the river as many fishes and crustaceans alike floated about. All of them were dead.

"Oww..."

Seeing all the dead fishes, Ling'er turned pale and felt nauseous.

On the riverbank, the few people who were performing the ritual were dumbfounded. There could not believe what they had just seen.

Uncle River, who had pressured them for many years, making them sacrifice so many young ladies, just died like that?

"He is dead! Uncle River would not let him off!"

The sorceresses were spouting nonsense as they started to curse Fang Yuan.

"Whoosh!"

In the next moment, a huge spiritual aura appeared from the river.

"Who was it?"

"Who dares to undermine the power of Uncle River of the Golden Dragon River?"

"Who was it?"

"Who dares to kill my crustaceans army?"

...

As a strong energy surged through the surroundings, a whirlpool exploded, revealing a golden glow which slowly formed the shape of a human in golden armour.

"Human, are you going against the agreement between Lie Country and my people?"

This person's form was illusionary and it was wearing gold armour. There were golden scales on its face and two long beards. All of these gave it a vibe of royalty.

As it waved its hands, a strong pressure was felt.

The pressure exerted combined with a mysterious force which seemed to be coming from inside of it, striking fear in all lifeforms in the vicinity.

"You are Uncle River of this river? You are the Dragon King in the legends...?"

Fang Yuan looked at the person in front of him with curiosity.

"That's right!"

The golden-armoured Uncle River remarked in a proud voice. "You have disturbed my auspicious event and killed my crustacean army. I will skin you and use you as oil to be burnt for three years!"

"Keke..."

Fang Yuan laughed.

Looking at the golden-armoured Uncle River, he had coldness in his eyes. "It seems that the Golden Dragon Lake has given you too much protection. How dare you even appear before me?"

"What do you mean?"

Uncle River felt that something was not right. With the wave of his hands, the river surged and thousands of water arrows were flying towards Fang Yuan.

Not just that, there was a defensive wall in front of him made from water crystals.

This level of water-type spiritual spells was comparable to an elementary spiritual knight.

But to Fang Yuan, in response to the water arrows, he waved his right hand. An illusionary red sword appeared in his hands as it swayed in the air.

"Whoosh!"

The water arrows exploded in mid-air.

Under the illumination of a red glow, the water fell downwards like rain. It was as though all of what had happened was just hallucination.

A sword to counter everything!

Although Fang Yuan's swordsmanship was only elementary, he could strengthen it with dream elemental force. With divine troops, sword essence and his own martial arts, it was comparable to the highest level of swordsmanship in the legends.

"The previous Mountain God of Zhuobie Mountain was not as daring as you to reveal himself to me!"

After commenting, he struck his sword out.

"Whoosh!"

There was a red glow.

A red glow struck through the defensive wall of water crystals and into the chest of the golden-armoured man.

"How dare you..."

The golden-armoured man looked down in disbelief. "My father will take revenge for me..."

"Idi*t!"

Without reservation, Fang Yuan pulled his sword back out. Soon after, the image of the golden-armoured man vanished as it became a golden carp.

The carp was only three inches long but all of its scales were golden in colour. More significantly, there were two long whiskers

on its mouth, making it extraordinary.

Fang Yuan did not care about all these. At Uncle River's moment of death, he released his spiritual will and covered the golden carp in dream elemental force.

"Where is the source of the realm energy?"

Chapter 241: Dragon Realm Energy

Although the Uncle River the golden carp was not the Golden Dragon God, it was still a Water God and had the attributes of a dragon. Or to put it in another word, it had the blood of the Golden Dragon God.

With such a status and the fact that it took ownership of a region, it would surely have the protection of the Dragon God.

Therefore, Fang Yuan quickly isolated its corpse and used his dream elemental force to attempt to keep it within his own actualised dream world.

Of course, a physical object like the corpse was impossible to be contained within the actualised dream world.

As the air around it vibrated, the corpse exploded and a loud bang was heard.

At the same time, Fang Yuan's expression changed.

He did gain something in his actualised dream world.

Before the carp exploded, a small white hint of realm energy appeared and quickly dissipated. The small tail of the carp was caught and thrown into the actualised dream world.

"Condense!"

Within the actualised dream world, Fang Yuan's true self appeared. He stretched out his right hand.

The air trembled and white streaks condensed on his palm, forming half the portion of realm energy. It was a pure white and was wriggling like an earthworm.

"If not for my ability to control my own actualised dream world, I might just let it disappear. Would the realm energy disappear the moment it is released? Could this be... natural realm energy?"

Fang Yuan sighed.

What was left in his hands was less than half the amount of realm energy from Uncle River.

He was already quick to capture the realm energy, but most of it had dissipated before he could keep it.

The amount of realm energy which Uncle River had was given to him by the Golden Dragon God, and might not even be 1% of what the Golden Dragon God had.

"What can I do with 0.5% of realm energy?"

After a long sigh, he opened his hands and released the realm energy.

Feng Xinzi and the few others were likely to be coming for this energy, so there must be some use for it.

If realm energy was released, it would dissipate quickly and disappear.

"Are there no changes?"

Fang Yuan looked at the size and height of his actualised dream world and shook his head. Suddenly, he glanced at his stats window:

"[8 Gates Sword Array (First Sword) (11%)]"

"There is an increase of 1% for the Leaving Fire Sword?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin and looked at his Leaving Fire Sword, which seemed to have not changed.

If not for the proficiency bar in his stats window, he would not even be aware of such a minor change.

"I've gained 1% from such a small amount of realm energy. What should I expect after getting the realm energy from Golden Dragon Lake?"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered. "The difficulty level for the other swords should be different from the Leaving Fire Sword, but it

should allow me to actualise a true Leaving Fire Divine Soldier and begin on my next step for the next sword, right?"

"Although I don't know the reason why Feng Xinzi and the rest are after the realm energy, to me, it is enough to know that I can increase my cultivation through it!"

"I am just lacking in a technique to seal the realm energy!"

If he used brute force, even if he could painstakingly kill the Golden Dragon God, he would lose more than half of its realm energy. How could he bear to let it go to waste?

Therefore, he had to obtain the technique to seal realm energy!

Since Feng Xinzi and the rest had already planned for the exploration mission in this realm a long time ago, they must be prepared.

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and returned to reality.

The river was surging.

Although he had many complicated thoughts in his dream world, it was only a blink of an eye in the reality.

Regardless if it was Ling'er who was beside him or Yu Da who was frightened to his wits, or even the crowd at the riverbank, none of them could react to what had just happened.

Uncle River was killed!

Since the accession of Golden Dragon God, nothing like that had ever happened!

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan was not interested in the commotion at the riverbank and directly commanded Ling'er.

Her eyes were filled with dismay, but she did not resist Fang Yuan.

After all, she knew that regardless of how things would turn out,

it would not be appropriate for her to return...

...

After three days, at Golden Dragon Lake.

The lake was extremely vast and deep. On the surface of the lake, there was a thin layer of fog. Many small islands were within the lake, housing many island dwellers who would only worship the Golden Dragon God. They were like their own country and even Lie Country could do nothing about it.

Along the sides of the lake, in a restaurant, Fang Yuan ordered a pot of wine, a few dishes and enjoyed himself there.

As for Ling'er, he had given her some money and let her off.

After all, he only wanted to help her for the sake of helping her, and it was a small issue.

As for the Golden Dragon Lake, there was peace after the death of Uncle River, the golden carp. This surprised Fang Yuan.

"He must be extremely nervous inside, right? I'm sure he is preparing for my arrival?"

Fang Yuan finished his last cup of wine and stood up, preparing to pay for the bill.

At this moment, he twitched a little before slowly sitting down again, smiling.

"Deng! Deng!"

As footsteps were heard, two people walked down from the wooden staircase from the upper floors. Seeing Fang Yuan, their expression remained unchanged as they walked over.

"Brother Fang!"

It was a man and a woman. The man looked like a martial artist while the woman was a beautiful lady. It was Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus.

Of course, even though they had already gotten used to their bodies, they flinched in uneasiness as they met someone familiar. After greeting each other, they promptly joined him at the table.

As the brute looking martial artist which Deity Clear Lotus was possessing waved his hands, a layer of mist appeared. From outside, people could only see three friends happily chatting.

"Alright, we can speak without a worry now!"

Deity Clear Lotus looked at Fang Yuan. "It has been a few days and Brother Fang has already accomplished something big!"

"Hmph..."

Venerable Fiery Dragon scoffed. "You killed Uncle River, the golden carp! Do you know how much trouble that would bring to our plan?"

"I have no idea!"

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders and gave an innocent look. "Didn't we agree to split up and do whatever we want? How would I know who your target would be?"

Venerable Fiery Dragon was stunned.

In fact, he had already discussed this with Deity Clear Lotus that the main objective would be to take down Golden Dragon God. This was why they came straight to Golden Dragon Lake.

After hearing the news of Uncle River being killed, they quickly came out from hiding without a regard for anything.

Little did they know that Fang Yuan was new to this place. Furthermore, since they did not discuss the 'big plan' with him, it was only normal that something like that would happen.

"As for you guys..."

Fang Yuan was infuriated. "Both of you know that realm energy is extremely beneficial. Why did you hide this fact from me?"

As he raged, the air around shook as though there was a strong source of energy.

Deity Clear Lotus looked at Venerable Fiery Dragon and were shocked. "Your cultivation level... How much have you recovered?"

"About 30% to 40%?"

Fang Yuan lied through his teeth.

"Keke... We have only heard about realm energy from Su Guo. Before confirming it, we did not dare to do anything reckless..."

Deity Clear Lotus tried to salvage the situation, but Fang Yuan did not believe anything that she said.

"If this is so, then Feng Xinzi and Yu Tianlao would also target this place, right?

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he asked.

"No, Feng Xinzi is much more greedier... As for Yu Tianlao, she is rather mysterious and no one would ever know what she is up to..."

Venerable Fiery Dragon looked at Fang Yuan and felt that he was too mysterious to be understood.

"Brother!"

As for Deity Clear Lotus, she waved her hands welcomingly. "It is fate that we are able to meet Brother Fang. Let's count him in, shall we? After all, it's good to have another person helping out! Looking at the situation at Golden Dragon Lake, I'm afraid just the two of us won't be able to handle it!"

"That's true!"

After a long silence, Venerable Fiery Dragon nodded his head.

"Oh, thank you for your generosity!"

Fang Yuan placed his fists together and acted like he was

appreciative. In a short while, after their exchanges and lies, it was weird that they could still get along.

"That's right... Brother Fang, your guess is correct. Both of us are here for the Golden Dragon God, or should I say... the realm energy within the 800-mile radius of the Golden Dragon Lake!"

Deity Clear Lotus nodded her head. "After my research, I found out that the realm energy would not only aid us in our cultivation in the Illusionary Divine Stage, it would also have miraculous effects in smelting weapons and doing alchemy!"

"The only problem is that it is hard to obtain and hard to contain..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and sighed.

"Looking at how things are, I'm guessing that you have lost more than half of the realm energy from killing Uncle River, right?"

Deity Clear Lotus bit her lips and smiled. "I can teach you a technique to contain the realm energy. Let this be a sign of my sincerity for working with us!"

"Hmph... The golden carp, Uncle River, is the third child of Golden Dragon God and has his love. If we were the ones to contain the realm energy, we would surely be able to contain 90% of it!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon spoke in a regretful tone.

"Haha... Forgive me for my recklessness!"

Fang Yuan smiled. "Since Deity Clear Lotus have expressed her sincerity and both of you are going after the Golden Dragon God, I'll listen to all of your commands!"

"That's great!"

Deity Clear Lotus was jubilant. "With the addition of Brother Fang, I am extremely confident we'll make it work this time!"

Fang Yuan was rather confused that Venerable Fiery Dragon did

not rebut Deity Clear Lotus's comment.

It seems that the power of Golden Dragon God was much more than he had imagined.

Indeed, Deity Clear Lotus started to describe Golden Dragon God's abilities. "Under this god, there is Uncle River, Patrolling Ghost and others. Most importantly, we have to contain the realm energy of Golden Dragon Lake. It is as powerful as 3 or 4 dream masters in the Illusionary Divine stage combined, and even Feng Xinzi is afraid of facing the Golden Dragon God alone... However, it is most troublesome when these beings are within their territories, as they would be strengthened by their realm energies. For instance, The king of Lie Country would be strengthened by the country's realm energy, which makes him invincible against many spiritual spells. Even Yu Tianlao could do nothing to him..."

"I see!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

"In fact, the realm energy in Hui Realm has appeared in Da Qian before, but in a different form!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon added on. "For instance, if the royal family of Da Qian did not have protection from the heavens and the control of the dragon energy, it would already be overrun by the crazy people from the Evil Divine Sect and the Divine Lotus Cult."

"Protection from the heavens, control of the dragon energy?"

Fang Yuan started to think about it and slowly began to understand the backing of the royal family of Da Qian.

"Mmm, the king of Lie Country is equivalent to a small Da Qian Emperor... With the realm energy of the country, we cannot go near him. However, if we are able to take his realm energy...."

There was a hint of temptation in Deity Clear Lotus's voice.

Chapter 242: Bait and Kill

Dragon God Island.

The island was situated in the depths of Golden Dragon Lake. On it, there was the largest temple, built to worship the Golden Dragon God. It was under the protection of many strong believers who lived nearby.

These island dwellers live among the islands in the lake and depend on the Golden Dragon God for survival. Their establishments on the lake were shocking and even the king of Lie Country could do nothing about it.

"Just on Dragon God Island itself, there are already about 10,000 people living on it, and a standing army!"

Fang Yuan and the two other dream masters approached the island, and their eyes were glittering.

One month had already passed since the three of them had met.

With they own secret techniques, Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus went all out and recovered more than half of what they originally had. To recover even more of their abilities, they were met with all sorts of restrictions. Compared to Fang Yuan's unique ability, the difference was obvious. At some point, he even felt that he could take the both of them down. Of course, that only remained as a thought.

Through the past month, they had collected quite a lot of information regarding Golden Dragon Lake.

Finally, the three of them could not hold it back any longer and started to plan their attack.

"Within the lake and especially at the Dragon God Island, the Golden Dragon God would be able to use its full strength, and he would be further strengthened by the realm energy..."

Fang Yuan shook his head. "We should not fight him here."

"Of course we wouldn't!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon gazed at Dragon God Island with a serious look and raised his hands.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

A few red sparrows landed on his arms and chirped cheerfully.

However, Venerable Fiery Dragon remained with his serious look, as though he had received new information.

"How's it?"

Deity Clear Lotus asked.

"The defence on Dragon God Island is tight. Even my secret technique to spy on them was discovered! We cannot go in by brute force!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon continued to look solemn and shook his head.

"If that is so, then the only way is to attract him out of his nest!"

Both of them looked at Fang Yuan.

Seeing their reactions, Fang Yuan rolled his eyes. "Shouldn't you keep your promises?"

"Alright!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon patted his own chest. "I will transfer you 100 contribution points when we get back!"

"I'll give you the technique to seal the realm energy now!"

Deity Qinghe passed her white-coloured inscription plate over.

"Alright!"

Fang Yuan took the inscription plate and placed it on his forehead. Immediately, he received a huge transcript of the technique. "I'll verify it on my own. If there are no problems with

it, we can carry on with our plan three days later!"

"That's good!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon exchanged mysterious glances with Deity Clear Lotus.

...

Three days later, on Dragon God Island.

"Roar! Roar!"

In the temple, a figure with the head of a dragon and the body of a human let out a terrifying roar.

It was similar to that of a tiger or leopard's roar, with the vibe of a God.

On Dragon God Island, people and animals alike would kneel down and pay their respects to the Golden Dragon God.

"Dragon God is here!"

In the temple, a priest was wearing a colourful but scaly hide. There were even scales on his face. He was in meditation, as though he was listening out for something. Quickly, he turned around and announced: "The mighty Golden Dragon God had passed down a decree! The person who killed his son, the golden carp, is here at Golden Dragon Lake... Find him and kill him! Bring his head back as an offering!"

"Wuuu! Wuuu!"

Many island dwellers shouted in fury as they started to paddle their boats and took their leave from the island.

...

At the border of Golden Dragon Lake.

"Shing!"

Fang Yuan pointed his finger out like a sword and struck at random.

In front of him, there was a huge tortoise. As the sword essence struck through its shell, green blood started to flow out.

"Five Places and Ten Earths, Seal!!!"

He struck his left palm on the shell of the tortoise.

"Buzz!"

A glow appeared and a small amount of realm energy was visible. As it struggled to escape, it was contained by the runes around. Slowly, the space around it shrunk and finally, it became like an earthworm, which was subsequently thrown into Fang Yuan's actualised dream world.

"This technique is really simple..."

The plan which Deity Clear Lotus and Venerable Fiery Dragon came up with was to use Fang Yuan's identity as a bait. He would enter the Golden Dragon Lake and attract the island dwellers out before killing them.

As long as the damage they could create was huge enough without displaying any real threat to the Golden Dragon God, he would surely appear to stop them!

What if he would decide to be a cowardly tortoise? They would kill their way in until the Golden Dragon God wouldn't be able to take it!"

Previously when Fang Yuan killed the golden carp, he sealed his own spiritual aura, which made him undetectable.

With his sudden revelation, he attracted this large tortoise and the other crustacean army.

"This is not right... you're overdoing it!"

Beside him, a red sparrow was chirping. "You need to fight and run at the same time, convincing the Golden Dragon God that he has the ability to take you down. The best would be to injure yourself and force him to come out of hiding, making himself

vulnerable!"

"I know..."

Fang Yuan waved his hands in annoyance but he was panicky inside.

If Venerable Fiery Dragon were to become a trickster, he would be rather successful.

"And also... The realm energy..."

The red sparrow stared at Fang Yuan as though it was begging for an earthworm to eat.

"Whoever killed it shall have it!"

Fang Yuan rejected him without hesitation, turned around and took his leave.

"Whoosh!"

At the small river near them, a splash appeared and a huge green prawn crawled up the shore. With its two huge claws, it started to snap at Fang Yuan.

"Another one who is looking for death!"

Fang Yuan looked across the lake and saw the silhouette of a wooden boat. He smiled.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

This time, the red bird leapt on his shoulders and chirped into his ears.

"Alright, I've got it, fight and run at the same time!"

Fang Yuan swung his sword out, forming a red moon in the air. Within seconds, he had already chopped off the head of the prawn and started to drag the prawn along with him by its tail. "It's such a rare sight to see a freshwater prawn this huge! We're having a good meal tonight."

As soon as he walked into a forest, there was a trail of blood

behind him.

...

Not long after, the news of a person wreaking havoc at Golden Dragon Lake spread.

The fishermen could haul up fishes of over ten inches long and huge turtle shells. Of course, they also found remnants of broken boats from the island dwellers.

Many fishermen reported that they had seen the devil before and that it was only a young man.

At the same time, the casualty rate on Dragon God Island steadily crept up.

Finally, it was the seventh day.

"Roar! Roar!"

As a dragon's roar was heard, the ground gave way. A golden flash of light shot out from the temple and towards the South.

South of Golden Dragon Lake.

"My God will never let you off!"

An island dweller, who was a Wu Zong, spat out blood.

He was highly skilled in martial arts and was at the level of a Wu Zong. With the assistance from other spiritual objects, he was comparable to a Wu Zong in the Meridian Opening Realm.

But now, he was laying on the ground like a dead dog. Not long after, he lost his breath and died.

"I'll wait for him!"

Fang Yuan breathed heavily, and his body condition had deteriorated.

This island dweller was indeed highly skilled and posed a formidable opponent. This resulted in Fang Yuan having multiple injuries and he was bleeding everywhere, soaking in clothes wet in

blood.

Of course, this didn't matter.

If he continued to head South and through a mountain, he would be out of the territory of Golden Dragon Lake.

If the Golden Dragon King wanted to strike, it would strike now.

Fang Yuan revealed a worn-out look and started to close his eyes and meditate.

Around him, there were many corpses of the island dwellers. It was like a massacre and huge volumes of blood filled the ground. It had turned black and was a nauseous sight to behold.

In the hell-like surroundings, Fang Yuan sat in the middle peacefully, which felt confusing.

After a short while, Fang Yuan stood up and was prepared to leave.

"Rumble!"

At this moment, a golden glow appeared and a strong surge of energy exploded!

At a small river beside where Fang Yuan was, there was a black shadow within. It was long like a gigantic snake.

"Roar! Roar!"

After the roars were heard, there was a huge splash and a gigantic water dragon appeared.

This water dragon had the body of a snake and had four claws. It was green in colour with hints of golden streaks on its back. With its ferocious eyes, he glanced at Fang Yuan. "Mortal, was it you who killed my son and destroyed my crustacean army?"

"Why do all Gods like such an entry?"

Fang Yuan dug his ears. "Regardless... You are still a water dragon, not a dragon!"

Fang Yuan was certain that this was the Golden Dragon God.

Even though it had the support from the royal family and had been existing for a few hundred years already, it still had insufficient cultivation to become a true dragon.

On the contrary, from the water dragon's eyes, he could only feel that he was evil and cruel.

"It seems that the gods in this realm are problematic. If you continue to rule with fear and control your followers, how can you think about achieving something big in the future?"

Fang Yuan shook his head and looked at the red sparrow.

"Alright, you can make the first move. Deity Clear Lotus and I will make the necessary arrangements to block his path!"

Fang Yuan could hear Venerable Fiery Dragon's voice in his mind.

"What audacity!"

Without a doubt, Fang Yuan's indifferent attitude had infuriated the Golden Dragon God.

With a water dragon's roar, the Golden Dragon God grew in size and struck a huge claw above Fang Yuan.

"Rumble!"

Fang Yuan quickly dodged the claw. At where he once stood, there was a huge claw mark on the ground.

"You indeed have the assistance from the realm energy from the Golden Dragon Lake..."

Fang Yuan widened his eyes. "Your physical body, energy and blood have already reached its peak! Watch out for my sword!"

As he complimented the Golden Dragon God, there was a glow on his right hand.

The illusionary shadow of a red spiritual sword appeared in his

hands.

"Leaving Fire Sword, strike!"

"Whoosh!"

A fiery glow struck mid-air and landed on the water dragon, knocking its scales off and revealing a wound.

"Rumble!"

Not just that, a small fire started to burn on the water dragon.

"Ah... How dare you..."

As the Golden Dragon God exclaimed, he harnessed his water-type techniques in an attempt to put out the fire.

Previously, Fang Yuan was concealing his true ability but now, as he used his full strength, he gave off a different feel.

"Who are you exactly?"

Golden Dragon God transfigured into a middle-aged man wearing robes and started to float in mid-air. He appeared solemn.

"I am the person who is responsible to kill you! Watch out!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed.

"Rumble!"

As the blood in the ground came together, spiritual inscriptions were formed, creating a huge array and trapping Golden Dragon God in it!

Chapter 243: Killing in the Array

"What is... this?"

In the blood array, Golden Dragon God was glowing as he was fighting against the binding array. His expression was changing.

"Save me, king!"

Amidst a blood fog, many illusionary shadows appeared. The first of them was an animal with the feathers of a crane and the shell of a tortoise. It looked fierce but the shadow of it was incomplete. Its eyes were bloodshot. "King... I'm in pain!"

"Dragon God! Dragon God!"

Behind him, many spirits were rushing and they were all covered in a black mist.

"God, please protect the island dwellers!"

Most of the island dwellers had fractured bones and they were like grieving souls surrounding the Golden Dragon King.

"What this about..."

Witnessing this scene, Fang Yuan's expression changed.

"Hehe... how's my Thousand Soul Bloodied Array?"

Beside him, Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus appeared. "I created this blood array. As for the grieving souls, it was Deity Clear Lotus's Karma Technique. It is normal for this god to experience all these karma, for he had a good deal of coming to an agreement to coexist with the mortals!"

"I've learnt!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. "Normal spiritual array masters would only know how to cast an array and the most they could do would be to rely on the geographical features of where the array would be cast. However, both of you are able to do it naturally

after taking into account the background of the Golden Dragon God and cast it naturally! Kudos!"

All these grieving spirits and island dwellers were not only killed by Fang Yuan but had to become a tool after death to go against the Golden Dragon King. They were pitiful as they were being manipulated while they were alive, and even after death.

Even the arranging of the array to trap the Golden Dragon King was an impressive one.

"The two of them... they are not simple! But to train and achieve the Illusionary Divine Stage, how could they not have had any help?"

Fang Yuan thought to himself silently and looked at the array.

...

"King..."

"Princess..."

"Save all of us!"

In the blood array, every grieving soul was pestering the Golden Dragon God.

"How dare all of you! Do you want to disobey my orders?"

Golden Dragon King took two steps back and revealed a face of determination. "Do all of you want to be destroyed and vanish from this world?"

"Rumble!"

As he spoke, a concentrated bubble of realm energy appeared from his body and rose up slowly like a cloud, becoming a sight to see 800 miles around the Golden Dragon Lake.

"Chi! Chi!"

The souls which approached him dissipated and melted as though they were snowmen under the sun.

"Rumble! Rumble!"

Surges of energies continuously struck the array like waves.

"What a strong force from his realm energy!"

Outside, Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus were frantic. "The most realm energy we have ever seen was from Uncle River. Who would have thought that this Golden Dragon God would have so much realm energy!"

"We cannot allow him to break out of the array, or he will escape through the water."

Deity Clear Lotus roared and placed her both her hands on the array.

"Chi! Chi!"

Within seconds, her strong arms quickly withered and became skin and bones. It was as though life was being sucked out of her arms.

"He will not escape. He will simply use the realm energy from the Golden Dragon Lake to destroy us completely!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon glanced into the cold-looking eyes of the Golden Dragon God. Together with Deity Clear Lotus, he placed his feminine hands onto the array.

After taking in life from the both of them, the blood array started to stabilise. Although it looked precarious, it was still able to contain the Golden Dragon God's relentless attacks.

However, both of them were extremely pale as though they were dead.

"Both of us have sacrificed 20 years of our lives in an attempt to contain the Golden Dragon God's realm energy for a while longer. Fang Yuan, quickly enter the array and kill him, or we will all lose our lives!"

Their voices were heard in Fang Yuan's mind, which made him

roll his eyes.

However, he also understood the teachings of arrays and could tell them both of them had already exerted their strength. If he were to ask them to fight against the Golden Dragon God, it would be extremely tough for them.

Furthermore, as time passed, both of their life essences would be lost. Their hair even turned white, which was evident that they had already lost many years of their lives.

"Without assistance from the realm energy, the dragon king is only a spiritual knight in the Elemental Opening Realm and a Wu Zong!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and took a step into the array.

"Rumble!"

In the next moment, everything changed!

It was bloodied all around and there was pressure felt everywhere.

In the centre, the Golden Dragon God's body glittered as it repelled the blood fog which was within the array. There was a streak of realm energy on his head which was sealed by the glow of blood from the array.

"Thief, it's you again!"

Seeing Fang Yuan, the Golden Dragon God's expression changed once more.

If not for him, how would he so carelessly leave the lake and be captured?

He wanted to kill Fang Yuan so badly and drink his blood!

However, it was an experienced god. "We are only on opposite ends because of the death of Uncle River. I have 8 other sons just like him, and countless crustacean army! Why not stop fighting... With all my wealth, I can compensate you anything you want!"

"Oh? You're becoming smarter!"

With a mysterious look, Fang Yuan shook his head. "What a pity... We don't want your treasures, but the realm energy in this 800-mile radius lake!"

"That is the source of my energy!"

The Golden Dragon King looked desolate. "It seems like... We have to fight each other to our deaths!"

As soon as he finished his sentence, he rushed forward and transfigured into a water dragon. With the swerve of his tail, he swiped at Fang Yuan.

"Pa!"

Fang Yuan was struck by the tail and fell above the array. He stood up as though he was uninjured and dusted his chest. "Indeed... Without assistance from the realm energy, you are not such a formidable opponent after all!"

"You!"

The water dragon in the blood array widened his eyes. "How can you remain uninjured?"

"Why not?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chest. As he rubbed, his clothing disintegrated and flew with the wind like butterflies, revealing his golden body.

This was the strength of Giant Eagle Metal Body coupled with the defensive Hundred Poison Golden Body!

"There is no such person like you in Lie Country who does not need to rely on the powers of the zodiac... What kind of God are you?"

The water dragon asked as he sounded confused.

"You are already a dead dragon. Why do you need to know so

much?"

Fang Yuan let out a laugh and pointed his right hand out.
"Thousand arrows, strike together!"

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

In his actualised dream world, the 8 Gates Sword Array shook.

Countless red-coloured sword essence filled the blood array, and in the array came an exclamation filled with fury and pain.

"Chi! Chi!"

"Rumble!"

In the blood array, the water dragon dodged the sword essences as they slowly inched towards the boundary of the lake.

Every time the array shook, Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus would spit out a mouthful of blood. Within minutes, their hair became completely white.

"This dragon is more powerful than we have expected!"

There was blood on Deity Clear Lotus's mouth. "If not for fate for us to meet Fang Yuan, we might end up dead if we were to strike recklessly!"

"That's true!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon had an awful look on his face. "I am worried about our friend not being able to take down the dragon in such a short time. If he takes a little longer, we would die and return to our realm. Yu Tianlao would surely laugh at us!"

"Kacha!"

At this point in time, a stronger force struck the array and cracks started to appear on its side.

In the array, Fang Yuan swung his sword essence around and slowly started to form a sword, landing it on the water dragon's body.

As the water dragon flew out, blood spurted everywhere and it crashed into the walls of the array.

As everything shook, countless water dragon scales and water dragon blood scattered on the ground like rain.

"Kacha!"

In the blood array, the blood glow which contained realm energy shook and started to crack under immense pressure. The realm energy within it was trying to break free as though it could emerge anytime.

"We can't hold any longer. We need to kill the dragon now!"

Through his spiritual will, Fang Yuan could sense that the both of them were about to use up all their energy. "If we let it escape, even I would probably die and it would hurt our own physical bodies! It would not be worth it then! Use your final strength!"

As the Golden Dragon King sensed that the realm energy was about to escape, it had a joyful look and became more composed.

"Rumble!"

In front of him, three spiritual meridians appeared on Fang Yuan's body forming a spiritual armour and covering his body.

"Whoosh!"

At the same time, a translucent fire sword was shimmering in Fang Yuan's hands. It had a dragon carving on its handle and was a Leaving Fire Sword.

"Sixth Elemental Force and the Leaving Fire Sword, kill!"

Becoming a shadow, Fang Yuan approached the Golden Dragon King swiftly.

As the spiritual armour glowed, it blocked off most of the attacks.

With the look of determination in his eyes, Fang Yuan danced around the water dragon and wielded the sword with all his life.

Avoiding all his other wounds, he came to the water dragon's neck and lunged forward!

"Roar! Roar!"

As the water dragon roared, it appeared as though it could not hold on further.

With the scales on its neck falling, Fang Yuan continued to strike the water dragon's body, allowing the sword's essence to explode within the body

"Growl!"

After a dull voice was heard, the water dragon's stomach expanded as though it had swallowed a small burning sun.

The stomach continued to grow and finally, it could not hold any longer and exploded.

As blood splattered across the sky, two halves of a water dragon's corpse fell from the sky and as it hit the ground, dust was stirred up.

"Finally... it had ended!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands, retrieving the scale from its neck.

It was an inverse scale and was different from the rest. It seemed to be of pure gold and different from the scales from other parts of its body, which stunned Fang Yuan.

"Kacha!"

In the next moment, the blood array crumbled.

"Phew... It's finally dead!"

"This d*mned dragon is really fierce... Wait, quickly contain the realm energy!"

Deity Clear Lotus and Venerable Fiery Dragon were stumbling about but held on and executed the technique to contain the realm energy in mid-air.

"Good!"

Without reservations, Fang Yuan helped out and the three of them worked together to execute the technique.

"Roar! Roar!"

Amidst the runes, a white streak of energy slithered like a dragon and on its way, it struck the seal.

"What a fellow!"

Fang Yuan gritted his teeth. "Such power! Indeed the realm energy from 800-mile radius of the Golden Dragon Lake!"

Chapter 244: Dragon Palace

Compared to Uncle River's realm energy, the process of sealing Golden Dragon God's realm energy was much harder.

Even though the three of them were working together, he could feel an energetic dragon forcing its way out.

"Haha... great!"

However, Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus were pleased.

The more difficult it was to contain the realm energy, the bigger their reward.

"Buzz!"

As the realm energy surged, dark clouds began to form above the entire Golden Dragon Lake.

In the sky, lightning struck everywhere.

Even though the three Illusionary Divine dream masters came together, the huge realm energy was extremely hard to contain, even without the Golden Dragon God controlling it.

"Five Places and Ten Earths, Seal!"

Finally, before the lightning could strike them, colourful runes were covered all over the realm energy and as it glowed, the realm energy was contained.

"Split!"

As the three of them worked together, according to their agreement, the dragon-shaped realm energy split.

"Kacha!"

In the explosion, the original realm energy became three smaller streaks of energy. As their power was reduced, they could no longer attempt to break out.

"The Golden Dragon God's realm energy is plentiful. If we carry it around us, we would attract too much attention and trouble for us. The best way to keep it is to keep it directly into our actualised dream world."

Without hesitation, Deity Clear Lotus and Venerable Fiery Dragon transferred their realm energy into their dream worlds.

Fang Yuan did the same thing.

The amount of realm energy was huge. With it, the Golden Dragon God could manage 800 miles of land and even go against the royal family. If all these realm energies were to land on a small god's hands or on a cultivator's hands, they would surely achieve a breakthrough immediately and therefore gain the power which the Golden Dragon God once had. After all, it would be more favourable for the realm energy to end up with the natives compared to Fang Yuan and company. At least, that would be the choice of the heavens.

"Although we are concealed in the bodies of the natives, the more we do, the more we are revealing ourselves..."

The three of them stood together and looked at the dissipating dark clouds. "The heavens would surely find some way to deal with us. They might even create some Energy Souls!"

"Energy Souls?"

Fang Yuan immediately thought of the protagonists in the novels which he had read about. These protagonists would be equipped with magical weapons and beautiful ladies would automatically come to them. With this thought, he shuddered.

"That's right. These Energy Souls are rather troublesome and cannot be killed. Therefore, they can become strong very quickly..."

Venerable Fiery Dragon gave an unpleasant look. "If we go after these Energy Souls, we might even encounter the even more

powerful Fate Souls. I'm sure you do not want to have the feeling of going against the entire world..."

"What we've done is still considered a small commotion in this world, right?"

Deity Clear Lotus's expression changed.

"This is only a Dragon King is a small place and the heavens might let us go. As For Feng Xinzi's big plan..."

Venerable Fiery Dragon shook his head. "It's not that simple. It would only be normal if the heavens would interfere. Regardless, in the next two months, we'll prepare to live in seclusion and handle the realm energy. What about you, Brother Fang?"

"Me?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his nose. "I would explore this world and gain more exposure. Don't you want to follow me to explore the dragon's nest?"

"... These treasures are useless to us..."

Deity Clear Lotus continued. "What is rarer than the corpse of a water dragon?"

Looking at the water dragon corpse on the ground, she commented. "To us, it can only be made into a one-time usage magical weapon to be disposed of in this world..."

Although pessimistic, they carried on to split the corpse of the water dragon.

They were friendly to each other since they knew that this was something they could not bring out of this world.

Afterwards, the three of them worked together once again as they prepared to explore Dragon God Island.

Other than an empty temple and the many escaping island dwellers, they still could not find the dragon's nest.

"Since he calls himself the Golden Dragon God, he might have built a Dragon Palace underwater!"

Deity Clear Lotus and Venerable Fiery Dragon immediately backed out. "In this 800-mile huge lake, even though we are dream masters in the Illusionary Divine stage, it is still impossible for us to slowly search for it. Instead of wasting time here, why not find a place for us to slowly recover our cultivation and make a few magical weapons in preparation for the final plan!"

Facing such a rejection, Fang Yuan could only laugh.

He had already restored all of his cultivation. Furthermore, he was not well-versed in smelting magical weapons. He could only show a face of regret as a response to their rejection and continue on with his plan.

"Although Deity Clear Lotus is right, I have nothing else to do. I have restored everything that I need to restore, so it will be alright for me to continue searching. I might even find something useful!"

After a few days, at night.

As the sun set, the moon started to spread its glow over the surface of the world.

On the lake, the moonlight was shimmery but there was peace everywhere.

"A full moon above the ocean, and people and the ends of the world can enjoy the same moon. For lovers would resent the long night and think of each other..."

Looking at the moon, Fang Yuan slowly recited a poem.

Although there were two suns in this realm, there was no changing moon, which disappointed him a little.

"This place... it is still not my original world!"

Lying on a small boat, he drifted along with the current. Looking at the moon above him, he took out a piece of scale.

This scale had sharp edges like a sword and was golden. It had a hint of dragon property and was not a normal scale; it was the inverse scale of the Golden Dragon God.

Because all three of them were friendly towards each other, or it could be the fact that they didn't mind, Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus did not say anything about him keeping the scale.

Under the moonlight, on the surface of the lake, the golden glow on the inverse scale intensified and inscriptions full of spiritual property started to appear on the scale.

As he dipped the inverse scale into the lake, there was a surge of energy which spread from the scale.

"It's the Dragon God!"

"Dragon God!"

Not long after, a black shadow appeared beneath the lake. "Golden Dragon God is already dead. How can I still detect his spiritual aura? Could it be a broken scale? If I swallow it, I will have the blood of the dragons and might even be able to become a dragon in the future!"

"Mortal, hand over the piece of scale!"

"Splash!"

As water splashed around, a huge black shadow emerged from the lake. It was a black snake's head the size of a water pot. Its ferocious eyes were like torches. As it spoke human language, its tongue slithered in and out of its mouth, making it seem evil.

If a normal person were to see this, they would be shocked and stunned.

"Who would've guessed that there is still such a monster in the Golden Dragon Lake!"

Without caring what the snake had said, Fang Yuan kept the

piece of scale. "I have a question. If you cannot answer, you will end up like the three previous island dwellers. They are now reflecting on their own actions in my stomach... Where is the Dragon Palace? Hmmm?"

As he asked, a huge pressure was felt in the vicinity and on the black snake.

"Ah... You're the human who killed Golden Dragon God!"

As the black snake exclaimed, it turned around and tried to escape.

How would Fang Yuan let it escape? With the casual flick of his finger, red-coloured sword essences appeared in mid-air and as it pierced through the black snake, there were many charred wounds appearing. Its red blood started to seep into the lake, dying it red.

"If you still want to escape, the next sword would be through your head!"

Snakes were extremely good at surviving. Although it had many wounds on its body, none of them was severe.

As it froze in mid-air, many figures of red swords were pointing towards its skull.

Such a threat almost made the snake cry.

It was extremely unlucky! It was only attracted by the blood smell of the Golden Dragon God but ended up facing the person who killed the God. If he had known, he wouldn't have come to risk its own life.

"I'll say, Sir!"

The black snake lowered its head, showing its respect. "There is a huge array outside the Dragon Palace. Normal island dwellers would not know its location, but the few Uncle Rivers and us demons would know. I'll bring you there now!"

"Very well!"

Fang Yuan leapt onto the snake's head.

With all his experience in dealing with animals, he knew that the snake was speaking the truth.

With the confusion array outside the Golden Dragon God's palace, normal island dwellers would unknowingly bypass it.

However, this black snake was not normal. With its status, it surely knew the location of the palace.

"Let's go!"

With Fang Yuan's command, the black snake leapt into the water.

'Humans cannot survive in the water. When we reach the bottom, i'll...'

As a cunning look flashed in the black snake's eyes, it quickly noticed a layer of spiritual armour surrounding the human, repelling the water around him. A long red sword was held to its head, which made it helpless and had no choice but to obediently show him the way.

As they swam across a group of colourful corals, an underwater palace appeared in front of Fang Yuan's eyes.

The palace appeared extremely luxurious and it was covered by a large hemisphere outside. Within it, corals were used as decoration and pearls covered the floor. It was a luxurious sight to behold.

"Sir... This is the location of the palace. Although I can trespass the protective array outside, without the permission of the Dragon God, I cannot decide on my own accord!"

The black snake humbly commented.

"Mmm, at least you're aware!"

Fang Yuan approached the membrane of the hemisphere. Something within his robes started to heat up. It was the piece of dragon scale!

"Verification of spiritual aura?"

Fang Yuan tilted his head to think, before pressing on the inverse scale.

"Buzz!"

A red glow with streaks of gold appeared as it landed on the membrane.

"Whoosh!"

As the membrane shook, an opening was revealed which was only large enough for one person to enter.

"Indeed!"

Fang Yuan smiled, kept the scale and walked it without hesitation.

As the opening gradually closed, the black snake waited for half a day before leaving quietly.

"This is not what I have expected. Although, the palace is luxurious, there are no servants here. On the contrary, it seems more like a secret hideout for a cultivator?"

Fang Yuan circled the palace a few times and noticed that the palace was not huge. As the membrane repelled the water, there was no water pressure within the palace. Instead, there was fresh air within. He stumbled upon an alchemy room, a study and a meditation room. He was ecstatic, especially with the whole room of books. Most of the books were about cultivation. Even though there were differences in their realms, it could still greatly improve his foundation.

Therefore, he decided to stay here for a month to take in all the knowledge he could.

Chapter 245: Self Destruction

The Dragon Palace was bathed in golden rays.

Walking along the pavement, one could see many Bright Moon Pearls radiating a brilliant glow.

Apart from that, there was also the Water Evading Pearl, Dust Evading Pearl and many other treasures conveniently placed in each and every corner. Any of these pearls would be highly sought after in the mortal world, but they were relegated to mere decorations in this fancy palace.

"There should be other deities in the dragon palace..."

Fang Yuan squatted in front of a pile of ashes and was deep in thought "The Golden Dragon God's realm energy was split into 3. Could they have fled the palace knowing that they have lost their pillar of support? But what about the water folks? Could it be that the Golden Dragon God was a very cautious person and would only let his subordinate the Yin Spirit stay in the palace and tend to him?"

This appeared rather curious to Fang Yuan. But he too had no one even though he was of a talented and courageous person.

On the flip side, if there was a tribe of dragon descendants and water folks, it would be a hassle to kill them all.

He arrived at the study and casually flipped open a book.

The Golden Dragon God had a vast collection. Some of the martial arts manuals were even inscribed onto bone or shell plates, then bound together. Every book could be considered a work of art.

"Rain Cloud Evoking formula?"

Fang Yuan teased out the gist out the formula. "Only a person with dragon properties could cultivate this technique..."

Specifically meant for demons... This book has indeed broadened my horizons."

He browsed through the manual and placed it down, picking up a roll of inscribed steel leaves.

This unknown leaf was wide and had a glossy surface. Inscribed on it was a tightly packed cluster of small words. Every stroke seemed to be filled with a rich history.

"Green Spiritual Sword Formula? Finally a martial arts technique for humans."

Fang Yuan glanced through it. The energy circulation techniques were crude and focused on rough sensations of the energy flow. The last few sword techniques were fairly unique and slightly interesting.

"After all, even Zodiac or Shinto cultivators' strength boils down to the strength of one's realm energy as well as the absorption of realm energy. One could achieve everything even without obtaining a high status in the society. As such, techniques of Hui Realm were biased towards utility."

"Mmm, such an interesting train of thought."

He firmly remembered the teachings of the Green Spiritual Sword Formula. These insights would aid him in completing his techniques or think on his toes in future situations.

In the blink of an eye, half a day has passed and Fang Yuan returned to the treasure vault of the Dragon Palace.

The vault was well hidden and it took Fang Yuan some effort to finally locate it.

In front of the broad and sturdy gate, stood statues of two spiritual beasts. They had black jewels as eyes and were very lifelike.

"Pi Xiu? [1]"

Fang Yuan stared at the spiritual beast and muttered to himself.

The statues had the form of a lion, a head of a dragon, a body of a horse, legs of a unicorn, and a pair of wings sprouted from its back. It had a very fierce expression and looked similar to a Pi Xiu.

"ROAR"

He stepped forward to touch the door handle when the two Pi Xiu roared to life.

"Hmph, trying to stop me with a simple static array?!"

The corners of Fang Yuan's eye curled, and the Leaving Fire Sword appeared in his hands.

Roar!

In that instant, there was a warmth radiating from his clothes. The Inverse Scale of the Golden Dragon God appeared with a pure gold hue and was pulsating with life, roars of a dragon could even be heard.

"WuWu!"

The two Pi Xiu bowed their heads in submission and returned to their original positions, turning back into stone statues.

"So you sensed the blood and spiritual aura of the Golden Dragon God?"

Fang Yuan kept the scale "This scale turned out to be the key to the array guarding this Dragon Palace. No wonder my journey in the Dragon Palace was so smooth sailing."

His placed both hands on the door.

The door was smelted from pure crimson copper, it was thick and tall, had 99 round studs and was complete with door knockers in the mouths of a beast. Its design was simple yet grand.

With a light push, the heavy doors swung apart effortlessly, revealing an entire vault filled with shimmering treasures.

Gold, platinum, pearls, jade, corals....

The large amounts treasures piled on the floor and formed a small mountain.

Fang Yuan paid no attention to them and walked deeper into the treasure vault.

In here, several pillars of rainbow corals were converted to shelves, on them were pieces of treasure, each of them was radiating energy in splendid brilliance.

"The Life Shortening Sword?"

He walked forward and read the label on the coral "Concocted from a 300-year-old coral's gold, mixed with 9 Bends Spiritual Wood, smelted with Venerable flames for 49 days. On the last day, the sword must be used kill a tiger demon, completing the concocted process. The edge would be unimaginably sharp. The sound of the sword cutting through the air struck fear into the souls of others, hence the name, Life Shortening Sword.

Beside it laid the handles of several spiritual weapons, all of good stats.

A unique piece was the Crystal Spiritual Armor, it was said to be forged from the shell of a 10,000 years old Mystic Turtle and possessed exceptional defensive capabilities. Fang Yuan was thrilled and put it on immediately.

Even though he could not bring it back to his original world, it would still be of good use in his time here in the Hui Realm.

"But... It was still right for Venerable Fiery Dragon and company to not come here."

He sat on the pile of gold and looked at the many treasures that lay in front of him, shaking his head. "There aren't many items that are of use to us, besides, they could not be brought out of this world. To delay one's recovery for these was not worth it. But...."

He walked to the depths of the vaults, shifted the corals away and lifted the Life Shortening Sword, and stabbed the wall furiously several times.

He shamelessly used the misused the spiritual sword as a shovel and dug a small hole in the walls, revealing a small hidden switch.

"Hahaha, hidden mechanisms designed by mortals would not fool me!"

He flicked the switch and opened the hidden safe, in it laid a tiny box.

The surface of the box was a deep black, covered with various spiritual inscriptions. It sat still without releasing any forms of energy, this was indeed a unique treasure.

"Tsk Tsk.... A self-destruction array?"

Fang Yuan deduced that from just the surface of the box and burst out in laughter, "There must be something very valuable hidden in it. It was a pity that I knew nothing of the unlocking techniques."

Despite that, he made a wild guess and placed the inverse scale onto the black box.

"If this scale cannot open the box, I would have no other options than to use brute force. I should be able to fish the item out before the box self-destructs."

He thought nonchalantly.

After all, there were not many treasures that could be brought back to their world like the realm energy. Even a legendary treasure would be of little use.

Roar!

Upon placing the scale on the box, a dragon cry was heard and a small water dragon emerged, as if it was a miniature golden dragon god, it was bathed in blood.

"An opportunity?"

Fang Yuan's eye twitched, the water dragon leapt onto the box and shimmered with spiritual light, his expression changed, "Oh no, it is initiating the self-destruction spiritual inscriptions!"

He had a horrified look on his face as his mind raced.

The Golden Dragon God had it designed this way on purpose. The scale was the key of the array, but when it came to this last treasure box, it became a command for self-destruction. A smart alec would think that it would unlock the box, but in reality, he had chosen to destroy it!

"This must be an item of great importance!"

Fang Yuan pointed his finger, the Fleeting Fire Sword appeared and split the box open forcefully.

At this point, luck dictated if his method would enable him to retrieve the treasure in its entirety.

He was a decisive man, and he acted upon his instincts immediately.

"Go!"

The Fleeting fire sword was condensed to its peak. It split into 2 before exploding.

"Come back"

Fang Yuan tried to fish out the treasure, then retreated quickly.

Boom!!!

A frightening explosion resulted, blowing the treasure vault into rubber.

Fang Yuan retreated to the entrance and looked at the horrid state the vault was in, speechless. He opened his fists.

In his palm, there was a small segment of roots remaining, of the length of a pinky. The rest of it was long gone.

"Is it some sort of spiritual plant?"

Fang Yuan could not appraise the grade of the spiritual plant just from the roots, but he was sure it was of extraordinary value.

"No... This is right and wrong..."

Fang Yuan sniffed the plant and felt something was different. He then used his spiritual will to look at White Whiskers in detail and saw large volumes of spiritual inscriptions on it. It was a pity most of it was destroyed.

"Such a pity... Even if I had the entire plant, it would be useless to me. Unless I could keep it in my actualized dream world and bring it away."

He looked at the roots and shook his head, "I still have some time on my hands, and why not try to salvage this plant?"

After all, Fang Yuan had the help of the Stats board, even though he started with nothing, he still retained his botany skills.

"These roots have water properties, the dragon palace would be an ideal location for it, and it was far superior to any spiritual lands."

Fang Yuan looked at his surroundings and obtained some information from the roots, he stroke his chin, and his eyes were brimming with joy.

He planned to spend his remaining time reading the manuals in the dragon palace study and to concentrate on cultivation. While doing so, he would be waiting for the plant to grow.

He was curious why the golden dragon god would go to such great lengths to destroy this object.

He got it doing it immediately.

Fang Yuan was a man of action, after careful considerations, he realized that the main hall of the dragon place had the best water energy. He tore it down and made it into a flower bed.

This flower bed was unlike others, it was surrounded by spiritual earth, in the middle, he made a small indentation that resembled a pond.

Above the dragon palace, the spiritual waterfall flowed down into the pond, it was milky and fragrant, filling up the pond. The white whiskers laid in the centre of it all.

Fang Yuan was fairly confident about reviving this spiritual plant. It all stemmed from his level 5 botany skills.

"Botany [Level 5] ----- You're now a master in the Botany Realm! Any plants planted by you would not only awaken but also develop special traits, the maturity period would also shorten based on the conditions!"

"Even though I cannot restore it to its original condition, to be able to awaken it or develop special traits would be good too..."

To him, successfully reviving the plant was going to be a bonus, a failure would just be remembered as a funny memory. With that in mind, Fang Yuan took his mind off the pond, went into a side chamber and sunk into a deep state of cultivation

[1] Qi Xiu is beast from Chinese mythology. It is a ferocious beast and it said to have a voracious appetite for gold, silver and jewels.

Chapter 246: Miraculous Fruit

Within the actualised dream world.

"Rumble!"

The dragon cried faintly.

After the spiritual seal was broken and the restrictions lifted completely, the white realm energy flew into the sky, transformed into a cloud dragon and thrashed around in the tiny space.

"It seems that you have not suffered enough!"

Fang Yuan shook his head as he witnessed the situation, "8 Gates Sword Array! Rise!"

"Swoosh!"

In the centre of the space, the cloud dragon did not dare approach the array. The 8 sword radiance flickered as they supported the heavens and earth, forming a sword array.

The fire-type sword essence was especially threatening as it appeared to overpower the other 7 sword essences.

Suddenly, the sword radiance shot out, surrounded the cloud dragon like a whirlpool and constantly inflicted cuts upon it.

The sharp radiance reduced the realm energy into the purest form of energy and scattered it.

"Crash!"

With the aid of the energy, the whole actualised dream world started to expand and the fire-type sword within the 8 Gates Sword Array started to form.

Finally, after a period of time, accompanied by the humming of the sword, the Leaving Fire Sword roared, the red glow shook the world as the scarlet dragon danced in the sky.

In that instant, multiple fire sword essences surged forth and

stimulated the entire dream world, causing it to expand multiple folds.

"Roar!"

The cloud dragon let out a cry, but it was unable to go against the insurmountable sword essence. It was completely destroyed and turned into pure elemental energy. The Leaving Fire Sword glowed and the scarlet dragon on the hilt appeared to come to life as it let out a roar.

"The fire-type sword is finally formed completely!"

To Fang Yuan, it was better to be content with what he had than to risk losing everything by doing too greedy. Even though the realm energy would be more useful in Da Qian, it would be better for him to increase his power before taking part in Feng Xingzi's grand plan.

Fang Yuan would use the realm energy to aid in his own cultivation regardless of how Venerable Fiery Dragon and the others think.

At this point in time, the Leaving Fire Sword was finally formed!

"The Leaving Fire Sword is located at the true South. Next, it will be the water-type sword located at the true North!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand and the Leaving Fire Sword fell onto his palm. Every inscription on the sword was real and appeared simple.

"Fire and water have no mercy. As of now, I am just a dream soldier master who has cultivated 1 sword. If I am able to successfully form the water-type sword, I would be able to summon it into the actual world to form the Water-Fire Dual Sword Array! This is also where the secret teachings of the 8 Gates Sword Array truly become formidable!"

Given Fang Yuan's current standard, he was able to summon a Leaving Fire Sword and was no different from an ordinary dream

soldier master.

However, once he would be able to form more swords, he would be able to combine the 3 talents [1], 4 divisions[2] and the 5 elements sword array ...the possibilities were endless and he would be able to change the world with his sword array!

"Using fire to stimulate water, go!"

He tossed out his fire-type sword and in an instant, at the North of the sword array, a penetrating chill, blue and slender long sword momentarily appeared. The water on it swirled around and started to gather.

"What a shame, this realm energy is only one-third of the Golden Dragon Lake! It was almost not enough to form the fire-type sword. I was only able to succeed due to the hard work that I put in the past 2 months!"

Fang Yuan shook his head. "If I am able to obtain the realm energy of the Golden Dragon God, it would be sufficient to form half the water-type sword..."

It would be increasingly difficult to form the swords of the 8 Gates Sword Array. Of course, those cultivating other pathways of dream masters would experience the same difficulty.

...

In the real world, Fang Yuan opened his eyes, "Stats window!"

In an instant, a screen which only he was able to see appeared before him:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 30

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: Illusionary Divine Stage (1st tier), Wu Zong (3 Meridians)

Technique: Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique [Grade 4(1%)], Hundred Poison Golden Body [1st Refining Stage], 8 Gates Sword Array [2 swords (1%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"The cultivation of a sword is able to raise the magical energy by 10?"

Fang Yuan was deep in thought. "Towards the end, the disparity would be even greater! It is no wonder that there are such great disparities between a high-levelled Illusionary Divine Stage dream master and an ordinary dream master..."

He stood up and shook his sleeves. He could not help but feel satisfied when he saw his collection of manuals that filled his entire house.

"After close to 2 months of training, I have completely refined the realm energy and reached another level in my cultivation. Not only that, I have memorized everything in the Dragon Palace records. This gain is sufficient...Furthermore, there is yet another surprise."

Fang Yuan arrived at the Dragon Palace Main Hall.

He had already torn down the place and converted it into a small flowerbed. In the middle, there was a pond and within the pond, the White Whiskers had germinated, grew...and transformed into pure white flower and plant.

Its leaves were sparkly and translucent and grew atop a white stalk. However, its veins were golden in colour.

If one were to observe carefully, one would be able to notice a large number of runes within the golden veins. It was truly a sight to behold.

At that moment, there was a white flower bud the size of a small bowl at the top of the spiritual plant.

"What an exotic spiritual plant, I have never heard of it before!"

Fang Yuan sat cross-legged and silently waited for the flower to bloom, "Who knows what type of fruits it will bear and what properties does the fruit have...."

After half a day, above the Dragon Palace, spiritual water cascaded endlessly.

Within the pond, the white flower bud quivered and started to blossom slowly.

"It's here!"

Fang Yuan opened both eyes and stared intently at the pond.

"Rumble!"

At this time, a faint sound heard from the outside world caused his expression to change. "This pressure...a heavenly threat?"

He looked at the spiritual flower in the middle of the pond in astonishment as he did not expect that the blossoming of this flower was predestined!

Above the Golden Dragon Lake.

Dense clouds loomed as lightning flashed.

It was as if the heavens were furious. The overwhelming pressure caused many spirits to cower and remain hidden in their dens, not daring to even reveal themselves.

This was a heavenly threat!

Within the Dragon Palace, the moment the first petal of the exotic flower blossomed..."Crack!"

Amidst the loud sound, the sky appeared to be ripped open and a streak of purple lightning suddenly descended, its target, the water body within the Dragon Palace.

"Crash!"

The surface of the lake rippled and many spiritual fish floated up with their bellies facing upwards. It was truly a disaster for the fishes in the pond.

"This Dragon Palace was built at the bottom of the lake with the intention of preventing lightning strike!"

Fang Yuan was not really shocked after witnessing this scene.

The Golden Dragon Lake was the first line of defence. The Coral Array outside was the second line of defence and the defensive array of the Dragon Palace was the third line of defence!

He was still in an advantageous position. Even if he was of no match, he would still be able to make his escape!

"The more you incur the jealousy of the heavens, the more I want to find out what kind of thing you are?"

Fang Yuan released the red light in his hand and a scarlet sword appeared. It was the Leaving Fire Sword!

However, compared to the shadowy sword essence previously, the current Leaving Fire Sword was the real deal! Even if Fang Yuan was dead, the sword could still remain within the real world and unleash its potential. It could even become an inheritance of a small family clan!

"Rumble!"

Outside, the lightning flashed endlessly. Some streaks of lightning even managed to reach the Dragon Palace.

"It is able to destroy the Coral Array outside so quickly even with the lake weakening it?"

Fang Yuan fixed his eyes on the pond. Within the pond, the white flower had blossomed halfway and a small amount of golden light was trickling out.

"Crack!"

A streak of lightning appeared and struck the top of the Dragon Palace heavily. The whole membrane shook and was shattered shortly after with a loud crash.

Water flooded in and the structures were overwhelmed. Large portions of the structures collapsed in a short duration.

"Stabilise!"

Fang Yuan's expression remained unchanged as a Leaving Fire Sword appeared. The Leaving Fire Sword circled the spiritual pond and channelled the water outwards.

"Crash!"

Within the spiritual pond, the flower finally bloomed completely and gave out a unique fragrance.

A ray of golden light descended from above.

At this time, a streak of purple lightning flashed, the specks of lightning combining as if it was a tiny snake and flew towards the golden light.

"Hey!"

Fang Yuan was expecting this. In the instant the purple lightning appeared, he had already drawn out the Leaving Fire Sword. "You dare intercept me? You did not ask for my permission!"

"Swoosh!"

An extremely concentrated line of fire flashed and struck the purple lightning snake.

Fang Yuan's arms trembled and he moved back a few steps.

Using the time that he had, he reached out and grabbed the golden light. Soon after, the white flower withered and turned to dust after it had served its purpose.

"Boom!"

Lightning danced crazily in the sky!

One could feel the wrath of the heavens even at the bottom of the lake.

"This is not fate, but rather...not stopping, not giving up unless the target is achieved!"

Fang Yuan's expression grew solemn.

Even though he was a dream master in the Illusionary Divine Stage, he would not be able to hold up against heaven's will. Even if he remained hidden in the Golden Dragon Lake and refused to leave, he would definitely be no match for heaven's trial!

"It looks like...this object is crucial!"

He looked at his palm and saw that the white exotic flower had borne a fruit which looked like a golden ball. There were runes which flickered and formed a ring of light around the surface of the fruit, causing onlookers to be dazzled.

"Crack! Crack!"

Another few streaks of lightning struck down, which caused Fang Yuan's spiritual armour to crack as he tried to flee.

"I cannot take it any longer!"

His face grew solemn as he started experimenting with transferring the golden fruit into the actualised dream world.

Even though he knew that doing so might destroy this mystical treasure, he still took a gamble and did it after weighing the pros and cons!

"Whoosh!"

Fang Yuan did not expect the process to take place without a hitch as the golden ball disappeared and reappeared in his actualised dream world.

After losing its target, the raging lightning turned peaceful. The dark clouds in the sky dispersed, revealing the scorching sun. The brilliant sunlight lit up the ground and formed a rainbow.

"Whooo..."

Fang Yuan's sorry shadow appeared beside the shore as he heaved another sigh. "It's so dangerous!"

If he was not able to form the first sword, he might not have the ability to keep the golden fruit safe from the lightning.

Furthermore, if he was not able to successfully transfer the golden fruit into the actualised dream world, Fang Yuan would have to give it up under the neverending heavenly lightning.

He might even be implicated if he was inattentive!

However, there was no problem now.

His actualised dream world and the real world could be considered two different worlds. As such, the heaven's trial of the real world could not reach him in his actualised dream world.

"It is just...what is that?"

Fang Yuan looked at the golden fruit within the actualised dream world. He was unable to discern the sand-like spiritual runes on the surface of the fruit which caused him to enter a deep thought. "What is this extraordinary object and who knows how the Golden Dragon God attain it in the first place..."

[1] The 3 talents refer to heavens, earth and man

[2] The four divisions refer to the four divisions of the 28 constellations

Chapter 247: Plan

In his actualised dream world, a golden fruit was floating in mid-air, and it was covered in the glow from the countless runes on it.

"This... doesn't seem like a spiritual fruit!"

Fang Yuan thought to himself.

The white flower could only be considered as 'half spiritual'. Leveraging on the way plants grow, it mimicked it to enter the world.

The most direct way to prove this theory was the fact that his own botany skill did not improve.

"Based on common sense, a spiritual plant which was able to attract the heaven's attention should be enough for me to achieve a breakthrough in my Botany, right? But now, it seems like there are no changes..."

Fang Yuan looked at his own stats window. "The only explanation is that the stats window does not consider it to be a spiritual plant?"

Fang Yuan examined the golden fruit closely.

It was concentrated with runes on its surface like stars in the night sky. The runes were arranged in a specific manner, but it was unknown as to what message it was trying to convey.

Furthermore, just by looking at it would make his eyes dazzle.

"It's alright. I'll look up on information on it when I return to Da Qian. From there, I might get some information..."

Fang Yuan looked up to the skies which were clearing up and turned around to leave. "Our three months are up. Since he had asked me for help here, I will have to return to meet up with Feng Xinzi to hear about his plan..."

...

After living in seclusion for two months before returning to civilization, Fang Yuan realised that Lie Country had ended up in a turmoil.

Fires were burning everywhere and there were fights among the soldiers. Even the peaceful lake was pushed into unrest as the dwellers made preparations to leave anytime.

"What happened?"

As he arrived at a city, he took out his knife-shaped coins and randomly asked a person on the streets who appeared educated.

"Oh..."

The scholar was around his 40s and had a goatee. He was wearing a pale green robe and it seemed like he was drinking to drown his sorrows. With a long sigh, he replied. "The country is unfortunate with a series of disasters... Two months ago, the Golden Dragon God was killed and there was unrest at the Golden Dragon Lake. The Lie Country continued to pressure and the two brothers of the king of Lie Country, Lord Chunhe and Lord Huixing gathered their troops to rebel. There were rumours that they had obtained the dragon's realm energy and took over ten cities, killing the imperial soldiers and are now starting to take over the capital!"

"Such a thing could happen?"

With The Qin Yi's memories, Fang Yuan was rather familiar with the happenings in Lie Country.

The lords here had their own pieces of land and their own private army. However, if they were not of the royal family, they would not be approved of power and status.

Lord Chunhe and Lord Huixing were strong contenders with influence and troops under them. With a sense of justice, they could cause trouble for the country if they led the rebellion.

"This feels weird..."

Fang Yuan took out a string of coins and chased the scholar away. There was a look of suspicion on his face. "Although both of them will benefit in the short term, the people under them would lose their homes and would hate them. Could they be frenzied? Wait a moment..."

There was a glow in his eyes. "Could it be that... Feng Xinzi and Yu Tianlao were behind all these? That's right. With this explanation, everything would make sense! His big plan would be to..."

At this point in time, Fang Yuan's eyes glittered. He quickly rushed towards Lie Country's capital.

...

The capital of Lie Country laid on a piece of flatland. The city walls were tall and surrounding the city was endless plots of farms.

But now, there were fires everywhere and smoke filled the air. There was a campsite set up just outside the city walls and the soldiers were sleeping with their weapons. War could happen anytime.

Not just that, in the daytime, soldiers would go out and harvest from the farms. It was evident that they wanted to cut off their food supply and had the intention to trap them for a long period of time.

On the city walls, as the king of Lie Country looked across, he was a little dizzy. "Why did this happen! Oh, why did this happen?"

He was in his 40s and his face was a healthy red. His skin was smooth and appeared young. He had considerable experience in politics but had not fought a war before. Therefore, he was lost at what to do facing such a situation, which put him at a disadvantage.

As the king of Lie Country, he had the protection of the dragon's realm energy, the assistance from his zodiac and strength from

Shinto. However, he still did not dare to retaliate. As for the threats from martial artists, he had his personal guards to take care of them.

However, what would be the use if he was the last one standing and the whole country was destroyed?

"Have you investigated?"

After a long sigh, the king of Lie Country gritted his teeth with a face of determination. Why are my two brothers rebelling?"

"Reporting!"

An official in black took a bow. He was in charge of reporting information. "Based on information from our spies, the Lords are being controlled by demons!"

"Demons?"

The king frowned.

"Since a long time ago, they were not reliant on the king, which meant that they would not have the assistance from the realm energies! However, the two demons both of mysterious spells which are able to hypnotise both Lords, by are able to strengthen them too, which ultimately resulted in the unrest today!"

The official in black lowered his head and kowtowed, and his forehead started to bleed. "I have not done my job, I deserve to die!"

"I am being blessed by the heavens! With the protection of the country's realm energy, how could demons possibly create unrest?"

With this news, the king was relieved. "Regardless of anything that might happen, my capital is heavily guarded. As long as we can defend until the few masters arrive, by then, they would be able to destroy the demons!"

"Wise words, king!"

Hundreds of officials echoed at the same time.

He had no choice but to go with this plan. Although it should not be considered a plan, it was nonetheless effective.

Most importantly, no one could shoulder the responsibility of losing a war within the city. Even so, since it was something that everyone supported, even though cowardly, everyone would still rejoice over it.

Witnessing this scene, the king of Lie Country could guess what his subordinates were thinking, and his eyes became blurry.

...

Outside the city, on a plateau.

"Brother Feng Xinzi, Sister Yu Tianlao, we meet again!"

Fang Yuan, Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus arrived here and indeed, they managed to meet Feng Xinzi and Yu Tianlao.

"It has only been a few days and you could do such a big thing! I was surprised!"

Deity Clear Lotus bit her lips and smiled. With the appearance of a brute man, everyone had goosebumps.

"Cough cough..."

Feng Xinzi twitched his face and looked towards Fang Yuan and Venerable Fiery Dragon. "What do you think about my army?"

"A messy bunch!"

Fang Yuan looked towards the campsite and shook his head. "The king of Lie Country didn't get his throne through the correct means. With his two brothers coming together to rebel against him, they could have the same power as compared to the power of Lie Country. With the split amongst the generals, they could only rob the commoners and attack the city, losing the heart to defend the country. Even though they might benefit in the short run, they would fall in the long term..."

"You're good! Good!"

Feng Xinzi clapped his hands and laughed. "I never knew that you would be familiar with the happenings in the world. I've underestimated you..."

"Isn't it more effective to wipe out the officials who are helping the king?"

Fang Yuan frowned. "When the masters arrive, the split generals would be easily defeated. What are your purposes in doing this?"

"Hehe... our purpose? Have you not guessed it yet?"

Yu Tianlao chuckled. "Why didn't the three of you inform me of the good deed that you guys were doing at Golden Dragon Lake? Don't you want to share the rewards with me? Hmm?"

"Keke..."

Venerable Fiery Dragon exchanged glances with Deity Clear Lotus and appeared embarrassed. "How could the realm energy at Golden Dragon Lake compare with the realm energy of the country? I'm sure that the two of you have gained something by training the Lords and their soldiers, right?"

"Of course we've gained. However, we've placed them in Chunhe and Huixing. Otherwise, how would these two id*ots survive until now?"

Feng Xinzi's eyes glittered. "Our big plan is to take the country's realm energy!"

'Indeed!'

Fang Yuan nodded his head silently in his mind.

Although the Golden Dragon Lake was only 800-mile radius wide, there was already such a concentrated realm energy in for the Golden Dragon God to have such power. However, it was still under the control of the country, which made it obvious as to how powerful the country's realm energy was.

He was not shocked that this was the thing which attracted Feng Xinzi.

"It's a perfect opportunity to strike when the king is at lost!"

Deity Clear Lotus lowered her head and was confused. "I'm sure we all know that the two Lords are useless and cannot complete their task... If the masters to gather, then it is a matter of them that their death would be imminent!"

"Therefore, it is up to us!"

Feng Xinzi looked at the capital of Lie Country with a burning look in his eyes. "Combining the power of five dream masters in the Illusionary Divine Stage, I'm sure we can break through a city gate!"

"Phew..."

Venerable Fiery Dragon took in a cold breath. "We can surely break through the city wall! But have you thought about the consequences? With the protection from the heavens, we are revealing ourselves to disasters from the heavens if we come out and take things into our own hands! We would then be plagued with endless troubles!"

"No risk, no rewards!"

Yu Tianlao glanced at Venerable Fiery Dragon. "Even with 20% of the country's realm energy, we can surely achieve a breakthrough in our own cultivation! Furthermore... Feng Xinzi had already prepared an array to cover us from the disasters in preparation for this trip... Didn't the few of you see it while we were dream-traversing?"

"If you think that is not enough, I have a secret technique with me to harness the realm energy and conceal our spiritual auras!"

Yu Tianlao looked at Fang Yuan and company before laughing. "Didn't the three of you get the realm energy from Golden Dragon Lake? Take it out now and after everything is done, you guys will

get your fair share!"

"This..."

Venerable Fiery Dragon exchanged glances with Deity Clear Lotus and both of them were hesitating.

Although the realm energy from the Golden Dragon Lake was valuable, they would surely agree if they could exchange it for the country's realm energy.

Although there were risks involved, they still had a chance of success.

After all, Feng Xinzi had already planned for quite a while and was confident of success.

"If the both of you are willing to give us our fair share of the country's realm energy, both of us would be willing to give our realm energy up."

Deity Clear Lotus nodded her head.

"What about you, Brother Fang?"

Feng Xinzi looked at Fang Yuan with a look of anticipation.

"This..."

Fang Yuan scratched his head and replied with embarrassment.
"I have already used up all my realm energy..."

Chapter 248: The Pen and The Sword

"Used up?"

Fang Yuan realised that not just Feng Xinzi, but even Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus were looking at him with disappointment.

"Do you know how valuable realm energy is?"

Deity Clear Lotus's finger shook. "If brought back to Da Qian, it can be exchanged for at least a thousand contribution points. Some high-tier dream masters might even come up with their own offers to buy or even owe you a favour... Even if you are keeping it for yourself for self-cultivation, you can combine it with spiritual objects to improve its effect. Why would you do this... you're wasting it!"

"Eh... it's actually our fault for not explaining it to him..."

There was a look of pity on Venerable Fiery Dragon's face.

As for Feng Xinzi and Yu Tianlao, both of them had a look of suspicion on their faces. They were suspecting if Fang Yuan had told them the truth.

To Fang Yuan, it was extremely worth it to use a third of the realm energy from the Golden Dragon Lake to achieve a breakthrough in his own cultivation as a dream master. It was not a waste.

No matter how good the prospects were, practical gains were the most important.

Fang Yuan remained speechless as he glanced at Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus giving up their realm energies to lend them out.

"Hehe... Brother Fang, you seem to be very nonchalant about everything here!"

Noticing him, Yu Tianlao chirped.

"It's not that... I am only thinking. Throughout the years, Lie Country must have some sort of backing or source of power to remain in power. Are the five of us enough to take down the king..."

"Keke... Don't worry, my friend!"

Feng Xinzi waved his hands. "I am already familiar with every person in Lie Country. No one is stronger than Golden Dragon God... except for the king of Lie Country. He has the protection of the realm energy, which makes it a little troublesome..."

"When do we strike?"

"Let's not delay things further. A day later would mean an additional day for the masters to prepare. Let's get ourselves ready and strike now!"

Feng Xinzi was decisive.

...

"Kill!"

Both lords, Chunhe and Huixing were Feng Xinzi's puppets. Just as Fang Yuan and company were making their last preparations, the commotion of chaos was heard as they prepare to invade the city.

"Bang!"

A huge catapult hurled a hundred-pound rock at the city wall.

As the rock crumbled into smaller pieces, it smashed into a few people, making blood spurt everywhere.

Those rocks which were slightly more accurate were flung just above the city walls, smashing everything in their way and resulting in a bloodied mess.

"Release the arrows!"

On the walls, soldiers were frantically trying to defend as they shot their arrows at the enemies.

As the enemies approached the walls, there were logs and rocks being rolled down, smashing everything in its way.

"Haha... the heavens are blessing the king!"

At the city gate, a general with a black face was laughing. "They have yet to compose themselves but are already attempting to attack the city! They are seeking death!"

Although they didn't know the reason behind the haphazard enemy attack, he knew that if they continued to attack, they would slowly be weakened!

They were disorganised to begin with and could only survive by pillaging the villagers.

Now that they were attacking without organisation, they would not be able to withstand once the casualty rate rises. They might even crumble in the next moment.

'By then, I would get the credit for everything... should I counter attack them outside the city? If I can capture any one of the lords, I might be heavily rewarded!!!'

Just as his eyes were glittering with greed, he could see 5 shadows rushing towards the city gate at an astonishing speed.

"Who are those? Kill them!"

Although he knew that these 5 people were highly skilled, he did not panic.

After all, in his many years of experience in Lie Country, he was already familiar with the different ambushes from enemies. Therefore, he could naturally react to the situation.

The only thing he was unaware was that the 5 of them had abilities he could never have imagined.

The next moment.

"Rumble!"

There was a huge explosion and the city walls shook. The general almost lost his footing.

His ears were buzzing and bleeding, and he felt a little dizzy.
"What happened?"

As he struggled to crawl onto the city walls, he was dumbfounded.

Where the city gate once was it was no more. Instead, there was a huge hole, and 5 silhouettes were standing by it.

"What are you guys waiting for? Attack! Attack!"

The guards outside the city were shocked as well. As they slowly came out of their daze, their eyes were bloodshot. "Those who enter the city will get riches and concubines... your pick!"

"Kill!"

Seeing that their strongest defence was destroyed, the attack soldiers were inspired. Attracted by the rewards, they shouted as they rushed into the city.

Compared to them, the guards within the city were stunned and unable to react.

Seeing the city gate being destroyed, their confidence was shaken.

Since their enemy had assistance from the gods, the only thing they could do was to run and escape!

"De... Demons!"

Looking at the five Illusionary Divine stage dream masters at the city gate, his face was flushed as he spat out a mouthful of blood.
"Even if it costs my life, I would fight all of you to my death!"

"Kill!"

"Kill them!"

His eyes were bloodshot. Enraged, he killed an escaping soldier and gathered his own soldiers, mustering their courage.

However, his fighting spirit was only a small wave in the ocean of enemy soldiers. Within seconds, he disappeared.

"Kacha!"

In the sky, dark clouds started to form as lightning danced in the sky.

It was as though the involvement of the 5 dream masters had angered the heavens, resulting in the natural disaster.

...

"What a defeat..."

At the city gate, the five dream masters in the Illusionary Divine stage were witnessing the war, and Fang Yuan sighed.

Even though the five of them were just standing there, the surrounding troops were still afraid to come near them and proactively gave them a small empty space.

"This is the downfall of the capital of Lie Country...."

Feng Xinzi lowered his head. "Do not hold back and release everything that we've got! Double Dragons, create chaos!"

Two streaks of realm energy appeared on his hands. Fang Yuan could recognise that they were from the Golden Dragon Lake.

In Feng Xinzi's hands, the two streaks of realm energy roared and transfigured into two white serpents. Rushing up into the sky, it formed an array and released 5 streaks of white glow, covering Fang Yuan and the rest of the dream masters.

"Oh... this is..."

Looking at the glow on his own hands, Fang Yuan no longer felt that there was an impending calamity.

'Feng Xinzi is an experienced dream master indeed. He can shield

us from the heavens with a simple array!"

Fang Yuan silently complimented him in his heart. Following, he could hear Feng Xinzi's voice. "This array can only cover us for about 4 hours. In return, we have to use up all the realm energy from the Golden Dragon Lake... we need to make full use of this opportunity!"

"Go!"

As the five of them looked at each other, they rushed into the royal palace.

"King! Bad news! The city has been invaded!"

In the royal palace, the king who has just returned to the palace turned pale. He almost tripped down a flight of stairs. "How can they enter so quickly?"

"It's 5 demons combining forces to break the city gate!"

"Such a thing could happen?"

The king got to his feet and cried. "Does the heavens want me dead?"

Ultimately, he was not the average person. Before the servants could console him, he had already wiped his tears. "I can die but the country must live on! Letting my brothers inherit the throne would still be better than letting the 5 demons take control! Where's the First Officer and First Lieutenant?

"We're here!"

As both of them arrived, they bowed with a face of determination.

"As king, I now announce that both of you are the imperial advisors. Quickly be on your way to kill the demons!"

The king of Lie Country clenched his teeth.

After wiping out the demons, even though the country would be

in shambles, he could still ensure his family's place on the throne. If the demons were to be successful, his heritage would be no more and the consequences would be unimaginable.

"Chi! Chi!"

Since he was the king, following his commands were dragon roars.

Behind the king, a huge streak of realm energy appeared. It stretched from the skies to the ground and a majestic power which the realm energy at the Golden Dragon Lake lacked.

"Whooo! Whooo!"

Two spiritual auras broke from the country's realm energy and landed on the First Officer and First Lieutenant, strengthening them.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

"Aww! Aww!"

Behind the both of them, there was a Vermilion Bird and a White Tiger respectively. Absorbing the realm energies, they started to achieve breakthroughs and arrived at a level no one had attained before.

"I can only die serving you to repay your kindness, king!"

In a bright glow, both of them flew upwards and out of the royal palace.

"King!"

The king was dizzy and almost fell to the ground. As he looked at the shocked faces of his servants around, he rubbed his nose, and blood came out. "In history, we do not make people imperial advisors unless necessary. Now, I understand why..."

'Appointing imperial advisors would suck out life from me, which would ultimately lead to my death...'

Finally, he understood. 'With such a minor injury, it must be the heavens siding me!'

...

"Be careful! The enemy is highly skilled and they are most probably the First Officer and First Lieutenant. They harness power from the zodiacs of a White Tiger and a Vermilion Bird respectively, are are the epitome of 'the pen and the sword'!"

Feng Xinzi could see two strong spiritual auras emerging from the royal palace, transfiguring into a White Tiger and a Vermilion Bird. "Killing them would render the king useless!"

"White Tiger, to counter their enemies?"

Fang Yuan stared at one of them with interest.

Above that person's head was a bright white glow forming the shape of a huge tiger. Just by the looks of it, it already seemed more superior to Qin Yi's white tiger.

Needless to say, there were glitters of stars on the white tiger, which made it look more ferocious and determined.

"Is this the zodiac which the country's realm energy support?"

Venerable Fiery Dragon appeared solemn. "With such power, I'm afraid they might be stronger than the Golden Dragon God!"

"Demon! Die!"

On the other side, there was a red glow and a Vermilion Bird landed, revealing an old man with a gentlemanly look and a crown on his head. As he pointed at the 5 of them, a burning inferno started to grow.

Chapter 249: The Battle

The old First Officer was still an advisor of Lie Country. As his zodiac strengthened him, he transformed into a Fiery Vermilion Bird as his power was used to its maximum capacity.

"Roar! Roar!"

As he struck, the other First Lieutenant was also coming towards them strong. With the roar of his white tiger, he swung a claw at the 5 of them.

The tiger's roar could be heard a thousand miles away and in it, there was a burning spiritual aura. As the power of the Alkaid Star landed, it was similar to the power of a Wu Zong in the Meridian Opening Realm; both were perfect counters to spiritual spells.

With the combination of the pen and the sword, their combined strength was more than just two Golden Dragon Gods!

"Ah..."

At one side, there were cries coming from the soldiers. They were set ablaze by the fire from the Vermilion Bird and were quickly burnt to death. Even the cultivators among them could not escape!

They were only watching from the sidelines but could already experience its intense power. This would mean that Fang Yuan and company would experience pressure from the bird a hundred, or even a thousand times more!

"You're good!"

Spiritual meridians appeared on Fang Yuan's back which formed a spiritual armour, and a fire-type spiritual sword was actualised on his hands as well. Fang Yuan let out a gentle sigh as he entered his strongest state, ready for battle.

"If I had yet to achieve a breakthrough, I might find it troublesome to deal with this thing!"

As the spiritual armour on his body glowed, it repelled the fire. Fang Yuan quickly glanced around.

Around Deity Clear Lotus, petals of lotuses appeared around her and let out a warm glow, separating her from the burning inferno outside.

With an exclamation, a red fiery dragon appeared around Venerable Fiery Dragon. Its scales were shimmering as it appeared extremely real. With another shout, the flames in the vicinity disappeared as the dragon started to swallow it up.

"Thank you Venerable!"

A pill's essence surrounded Feng Xinzi as he smiled at Venerable Fiery Dragon.

"Hehe... do you really want to use your child's play against me..."

Yu Tianlao looked at the Alkaid Star White Tiger zodiac and laughed. "Pain!"

"Aw! Aw!"

The tiger claw suddenly stopped in mid-air and the entire tiger started to flicker.

Within the tiger, the old First Lieutenant went pale as he clenched his teeth, almost shrieking in pain.

"How's it, old lieutenant?"

Seeing this, First Officer stopped and instructed the Vermilion Bird to spread its wings, covering both of them inside.

"Be careful of that woman! Her witchcraft do harm by merely speaking a few words!"

First Lieutenant wiped the blood stains on his mouth. Slowly, his eyes turned bloodshot.

"Is this a curse technique?"

Fang Yuan looked at Yu Tianlao with confusion. "Indeed

mysterious!"

In the next moment, the Alkaid Star White Tiger stabilized once again and pounced out with bloodshot eyes.

"Burn!"

With a smile, she continued her Mastery of Curses.

"Aw! Aw!"

But this time, the Alkaid Star White Tiger was prepared as it roared loudly.

"Rumble!"

A glow shot down from the Alkaid Star and transfigured into a long spear striking down.

"Pu!!!"

Yu Tianlao's expression changed as she spat out a mouthful of blood. Quickly, she retreated. "What are you all waiting for? Do you want to see me die?"

From her tone, Fang Yuan could here a rare hint of anxiety.

He looked up towards the sky.

From there, he could see a bright Alkaid Star!

'It seems that there are limitations to the Mastery of Curses. For instance, if she were to curse something with a much higher cultivation, she would experience a backlash! The first Lieutenant is rather smart to link up himself with the Alkaid Star. This way, if Yu Tianlao wanted to curse him, she would have to curse the entire Big Dipper or face backlash!'

Looking around, he realised that Feng Xinzi was a dream alchemy master while Deity Clear Lotus and Venerable Fiery Dragon were dream spells masters. With a sigh, he swung his fire-type spiritual sword out.

"Whoosh!"

The completely formed fire-type sword essence formed a streak of fire as it shot towards the Alkaid Star White Tiger.

"Aw! Aw!"

The white tiger was fearless as it continued to swipe at the sword essence.

"Whoosh!"

After a sound was heard, the white tiger's claw was severed and fell to the ground.

"Whoosh!"

Fang Yuan became a black shadow as he rushed into the figure of the white tiger. With another strike of his sword, the sword essence exploded as the First Lieutenant' expression changed.
"What an impressive magical weapon!"

He had the premonition that even with the blessings of the country's realm energy, he would still succumb to Fang Yuan's red sword!

"Oh, so Brother Fang is a dream soldier master!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon complimented him as he waved his hands, mustering the fiery dragon to fight with the white tiger.

"First Officer, we are your opponents!"

Seeing Fang Yuan making the first move and Venerable Fiery Dragon blocking the path of the First Lieutenant's white tiger, Feng Xinzi and Deity Clear Lotus stood in front of the First Officer. Pill essence and lotus petals filled the air and even the Vermilion Bird could not break through.

"Feng Xinzi?"

The First Officer's eyes glittered. "I've heard that the two lords are being incited by a man named 'Feng Xinzi'. Is that you?"

"Naturally!"

Feng Xinzi was not a cowardly man as he quickly admitted.

"This would mean that you are the man behind all these. You are a criminal and deserves to die!"

The First Officer appeared solemn. "Die!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Behind him, the Vermilion Bird gave out a long chirp as its flames grew bigger. It flew towards Feng Xinzi.

"A sacrificial move?"

Feng Xinzi shook his head and his body started to glow. Quickly, he transformed into the shape of a cauldron.

The cauldron was red and had three legs and two handles by its side. It was as though it was carved from a huge red piece of jade. Suddenly, the top of the cauldron opened up and fire began to spit out of it.

"Fire Consuming Cauldron?"

Deity Clear Lotus could recognise that this was Feng Xinzi's signature move.

However, a Vermilion Bird's sacrificial move would create a much scarier inferno than anyone could ever imagine!

Even an alchemy master's cauldron was not enough to consume the flames in entirety. As the golden flames spread, Deity Clear Lotus and Feng Xinzi were forced to retreat in embarrassment.

"Nothing happened?"

After a wave of flames, the First Officer shook his head as he realised that both of them were unharmed. As he mustered his energy, a streak of light emerged from his head as it searched for a random star in the sky to combine its energy.

"Rumble!"

As the glow from the stars scattered, a Vermilion Bird burning in

flames appeared and once again went after Feng Xinzi and Deity Clear Lotus.

Inspiration in writing transforming into a Vermilion Bird! The rebirth of the bird!

The First Officer was filled with a scholarly vibe and in the destruction of his zodiac, pure tongues of flames swept across, and it was a terrifying sight to behold!

"Yu Tianlao!"

Even Feng Xinzi could not cope with the continuous waves of flames as he called for help.

"Extinguish!"

As Yu Tianlao glanced over, she did not dare to curse the First Officer anymore. Instead, she targeted the Vermilion Bird directly.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The newly reborn Vermilion Bird's flames weakened in a moment.

Seeing this, the First Officer sighed and continued to release his scholarly vibes as fuel for the Vermilion Bird to recover and strike back once again.

"Hey old man, although you're the First Officer, don't you still want to keep your life? Why are you going all out?"

Feng Xinzi had always been very gentlemanly but this time, he could not hold back. "Since you want to die, we'll grant you your wish! Continue to hold up against him, he won't be able to hold on for long!"

"Everyone would die someday!"

The First Officer smiled calmly and looked at the First Lieutenant.

"Aw! Aw!"

The white tiger started to roar.

The First Lieutenant was at a disadvantaged situation.

As the sword radiance glittered, there was another charred scar on his shoulder.

Fang Yuan was one of the rare dream masters with highly skilled martial arts.

Not just that, his fully actualised magical soldiers were extremely sharp and hardy.

With the combination of skill and weapon, he had reached the peak potential of a dream soldier master!

Furthermore, there was Venerable Fiery Dragon who was also helping out with his spiritual spells.

"Bind!"

As Venerable Fiery Dragon pointed to the ground, vines started to appear and bind the white tiger.

"This is the time! Fiery dragon - explode!"

With a heartless look, he exclaimed.

"Rumble!"

The fiery dragon roared and exploded and within seconds, the white tiger was covered in red flames.

"You..."

The First Lieutenant's face was flushed and there were burnt marks all over his body. With the explosion, he flew backwards.

Fang Yuan would not let such a golden opportunity slip by.

At the moment of explosion, he risked the flames and rushed towards the First Lieutenant, striking his right hand out.

"Whooosh!"

The flames flickered.

The fire-type sword went straight through the First Lieutenant but there was no blood, as the wound was charred!

With such an injury, any mortal, even if he was an imperial advisor, would die without a doubt!

"Cough cough..."

The First Lieutenant's expression changed as he spat out a few mouthfuls of blood. With a smile, he exclaimed. "Brother, I'll take my leave first!"

Behind him, the Alkaid Star White Tiger wailed and condensed.

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan's eyebrow twitched as he retreated quickly with Venerable Fiery Dragon.

"Haha... either way, I'll die! Why not die for the country?"

As the First Officer cringed, he appeared as though he had aged another 10 years. "With my green blood, dye the skies green! Green Skies Green Blood, the Vermilion Bird shall burn!!!"

"Pu!"

With his knife, he sliced his chest.

"Whoosh!"

Green blood started to flow out as it seeped into the Vermilion Bird.

Shortly after, the First Officer appeared weakened and seemed like he could not live much longer.

However, with the Green Skies Green Blood chant, the undead Vermilion Bird let out a long chirp and spread its wings. Its spiritual aura started to grow by a thousand folds!

"Two crazy old men!"

The five dream masters quickly retreated as they witnessed two mushroom-shaped clouds floating up in the air.

"They are only a temporary nuisance!"

Feng Xinzi wiped the blood from his mouth and exclaimed. "This is not good!"

"Kacha!"

"Kacha!"

5 consecutive distinct sounds were heard as the white glow on Fang Yuan and company exploded!

"Whoooo!"

The winds blew and dark clouds started to spread across the sky!

In the skies, lightning started to strike everywhere and in the thunder, there was a familiar feeling of impending threat.

The self-destruction of the two old men, together with the realm energy had destroyed the protection on their bodies! Their demonic and evil spiritual auras were revealed in the realm.

"Rumble!"

Thunder roared and it was as though the heavens were taking things into their own hands!

A tribulation from the heavens has arrived!

Chapter 250: Wrapping Things Up

"Kacha!"

Amidst the dark clouds, lightning struck everywhere and 5 streaks of purple lightning descended from the heavens! This was a tribulation from the heavens, a backlash from the entire realm!

"We have to give it our all!"

The five dream masters looked at each other and exclaimed.

"Fire Consuming Cauldron!"

"Fiery dragon explosion!"

"Funeral Flowers Chant!"

"Seal!"

The 4 dream masters all revealed their signature moves to counter the purple lightning.

Even Fang Yuan was solemn. His Sixth Elemental Force exploded and together with his fire-type spiritual sword, he sliced towards the purple lightning.

"Rumble!"

As the lightning met with his sword, his hand shook and he retreated, his face looking desolate.

"What on earth..."

Looking at the Leaving Fire Sword, he noticed the spiritual light from it becoming dimmer. It was evident that the sword was damaged, and he let out a soft sigh.

He had restored his full power and could only do so much to counter the tribulation from the heavens. The 4 other dream masters would surely have it worse.

"The power of the tribulation increases as we continue to fight against it."

Looking at the dark clouds in the sky, Fang Yuan laughed coldly. "If we lose our physical bodies, our souls would be exposed to the elements. Even though we are at the Illusionary Divine stage, our souls would still be captured and it would not be as simple as damaging our original bodies."

"This is not good..."

Feng Xinzi's robes flew with the wind and his chest started to turn red. Suddenly, he shouted. "We cannot guess the heaven's intention and it is unwise to go against it. The only way out is to kill the king of Lie Country and obtain the country's realm energy before making our way back!"

Even though they were possessing the bodies of the natives, the heavens could already identify them and the tribulations would only continue.

They could only have a chance of survival if they had the power of the entire world, but how was that possible?

With that, Fang Yuan started to laugh to himself as he heard what Feng Xinzi said.

"Alright!"

However, he was not standing in their shoes as he had already reaped the benefits and would not be without his gains if he returned. Venerable Fiery Dragon and Deity Clear Lotus, on the other hand, would feel the pain as they would have lost everything. Thus, they quickly rushed towards the royal palace.

On the top floors of the royal palace.

"Demons! Demons indeed!"

The king of Lie Country shuddered as he witnessed these five silhouettes killing the First Officer and First Lieutenant, as well as countering the tribulations from the heavens. With that, his legs turned to jelly.

"Protect the king!"

In the royal palace, there were other highly skilled people other than the First Officer and First Lieutenant.

Many servants and generals rushed towards the five of them like grasshoppers trying to block a car.

"Seeking death!"

Against the few desperate dream masters, they all turned into a bloodied mess.

A few unlucky ones even had to undergo the tribulations from the heavens and were struck by lightning.

"King... The capital and royal palace have been invaded. You are no longer the king. Cooperate with us and give us the realm energy, and we might just let your soul free!"

Feng Xinzi struck his palm and a few armoured guards flew away.

Originally, his plan was to gather both Chunhe and Huixin to rebel and force the king to give up his throne and strike while they hand over the dragon's realm energy.

But now, since the heavens had already detected them, the plan was being messed up.

"Rumble!"

The dark clouds covered the entire country and darkness filled every corner of the palace. Within minutes, it had turned into night time.

As the purple lightning struck, the vicinity would be lighted up for a second, illuminating a chaotic capital city and the pale face of the king of Lie Country.

"Quickly hide, king! These demons are undergoing tribulations from the heavens and cannot last long!"

At one side, a servant advised the king.

"It's too late!"

The king laughed. "I am already dead! Even if I were to die, I will not let these demons get what they want!"

As he spoke, blood began to flow out of his mouth.

"King..."

The servants beside him cried. Without another word, all of them surrounded the king as they attempted to let the king survive a little longer.

"The King of Lie Country dictates that the Country's realm energy will return to the heavens. Heavens, please decide on how you would deal with these demons!"

As the king struggled, he used his blood to write out a few sentences. Within seconds, his face started to bleed as he lost his breath.

As the 5 dream masters rushed upstairs, they were shocked.

A pitiful roar of a dragon was heard and the illusionary shadow of a water dragon fell.

Following, a streak of realm energy as thick as a pillar separated from the water dragon and shot straight into the sky before disappearing.

Everything happened within seconds but Feng Xinzi quickly understood what was happening. "Despicable!"

"How can the king be so extreme? To destroy his own country?"

Witnessing the scene, Fang Yuan was confused as well.

Originally, even if the king were to kill himself, the dragon's realm energy would be split among the few potential heirs of the throne, with Chunhe and Huixing being the likely recipients.

If that had happened, then everything would have gone according to Feng Xinzi's plan.

But now, by returning the country's realm energy to the heavens, it was destroying all their hopes.

"Ah! Even though you're dead, I will kill all your descendants and burn your soul!!!"

Venerable Fiery Dragon was enraged.

Both Deity Clear Lotus and himself had invested their realm energies and thought that they could gain from it. But now, everything was lost and he was going crazy.

"Rumble!"

As for the heavens, after receiving the realm energy from the king, the lightning and thunders rumbled with much more power than before.

Countless purple lightning formed the shape of an eye.

The eye of the heavens!

Suddenly, the dream masters felt as though they were being seen through.

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan was decisive. Although he could defend himself from the previous few rounds of tribulations, the heavens were truly awakened this time. They had no chance against it and he quickly executed his dream-traversing technique to abandon his body as he travelled back to his own realm.

"Buzz!"

As that moment, he vaguely heard the exclamations from Feng Xinzi and the rest and a red lightning striking his possessed body, burning it.

...

Da Qian Empire, Sand Region, Dongyi County.

Fang Yuan shook as he opened his eyes.

"Phew!"

After shaking his limbs, he only felt a little weaker than before. It was a good thing that he had instructed his body to continuously take in elemental force before leaving it, and therefore everything was fine.

However, he still felt a little fear at the moment he left the Hui Realm.

The red lightning was stronger than the previous tribulation by 10 times! 100 times!

At his current level of cultivation, if he were to be struck, he would die in the realm and even affect his own real body!

"The good thing is that... I have still gained from this trip!"

Looking at his stats winder, he smiled.

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 30

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: Illusionary Divine (1st Tier), Wu Zong (3rd Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 4) (1%)], Hundred Poison Golden Body (1st Refining), [8 Gates Sword Array (2nd Sword) (10%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"The realm energy from the Golden Dragon Lake is enough for the 8 Gates Sword Array to achieve a breakthrough, and that is enough..."

Fang Yuan's consciousness entered his actualised dream world. Looking at the centre of the 8 Gates Sword Array, he noticed that the Leaving Fire Sword was dimmer than usual. This was due to

the damage that it had sustained from countering the tribulation. However, it didn't matter as he could slowly use his dream elemental energy to repair it.

Other than that, there was also a golden fruit floating in mid-air as it floated around with his dream elemental force. There was a circle of golden glow around it and it was covered in runes.

"Let me find out more about this in the Dream Realm... and also take a look at Feng Xinzi and the rest of them... they still owe me a ton of contribution points!"

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and entered the Dream Realm.

The streets were busy as usual. As soon as Fang Yuan entered the Dream Realm, his jade inscription plate started to glow.

"Feng Xinzi?"

Fang Yuan's eyebrows twitched.

"It's me... Brother, let's meet at the usual place!"

Feng Xinzi sounded weak.

"Alright!"

Fang Yuan was deep in his own thoughts as he arrived at the tea building.

Indeed, Feng Xinzi was already waiting for him in a private room.

Inside, a beautiful lady with a familiar spiritual aura greeting Fang Yuan.

"Its Deity Clear Lotus!"

He smiled and recognised her. "I wonder where Venerable Fiery Dragon and Yu Tianlao are?"

"Yu Tianlao and yourself were quick to react and left before the lightning struck. As for Feng Xinzi and myself, we were a little slower and were slightly affected and our souls were heavily wounded. As for Brother Fiery Dragon..."

Deity Clear Lotus revealed a sad look. "We still have no news of him. I have already contacted the people of his sect but there is still no news of him. I'm afraid... he is unfortunate!"

Fang Yuan bit his lip.

No one would expect that a simple exploration mission would escalate into such a situation.

"In that realm, normal deaths would lead to damage to the soul. However, for us, we have crossed the line..."

Feng Xinzi let out a bitter laugh. "Before I came here, I have researched about the red lightning. It seems that the lightning is from the natural source in that realm! Dream masters who would attract such a lightning would usually not end up well!"

"Natural source?"

Fang Yuan was deep in his thoughts.

"That's right... the natural source of energy of Hui Realm is from their realm energy, and especially from the country's dragon realm energy. The heavens were enraged to the point that they would not mind consuming their natural source of energy to destroy us..."

There was fear in Feng Xinzi's voice.

In fact, he was prepared for the journey to Hui Realm. Otherwise, he wouldn't have gotten the array which was able to shield them from the tribulations.

Never would they have thought that an enraged world would be so scary, and this was a huge blow to him.

"Oh... I'm afraid that Brother Fiery Dragon's soul is either severely injured or he might have died, and I am at fault..."

Feng Xinzi sighed, took out his inscription plate and waved his hands. On Fang Yuan's inscription plate, there was an additional string of contribution points. "This is the promised contribution points!"

"And from me!"

Deity Clear Lotus was honourable and quickly transferred contribution points to Fang Yuan as well.

"Thank you!"

This was what they had agreed on, and Fang Yuan accepted the contribution points without hesitation. They continued to talk for a while.

Feng Xinzi and Deity Clear Lotus were both injured. Not long after, they parted as they returned to healing their injuries.

Chapter 251: Hire

Fang Yuan originally had no more contribution points left. But now, he had another few hundred contribution points and he hesitated no more as he arrived at the rock tablet.

"Based on the number of contribution points I have, I'm sure I will have enough to hire a high-tiered dream master to discover the path ahead for my Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique. However, I can only make breakthroughs for a few more grades, and might as well buy the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique!"

After thinking about it, he released his interest in buying the entire recordings of the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique and placed emphasis on the entire recordings. This meant that he expected the recordings to include the process of condensing the Divine Body.

Fang Yuan was speechless when he realised that he had to pay a contribution point just by releasing his request.

"Next up... to find out information relating to dream-traversing the different realms!"

He quickly browsed through the information on the rock tablet as the relevant ones were sieved out.

There would be a short synopsis of the information to allow the reader to understand what the information was about before the reader would decide to buy the information so that he could continue reading the information.

Suddenly, Fang Yuan shuddered.

He focused on a piece of information regarding how to accurately dream-traverse to a specific location and there was a picture as well, which piqued his interest.

The information was recorded by a famous dream master known as Venerable Dream Traverser. He also realised that his recordings

were rather popular as many had bought from him.

He immediately bought it without hesitation when he realised that he would have to fork out 100 contribution points for the recording.

"Rumble!"

A glow emerged and huge chunks of information appeared.

"The realm would be unaware that you are from a foreign realm... There are two ways in which dream masters can explore worlds. Either by exploring the worlds in their true physical body or through dream-traversing... I will first explain how to dream-traverse to a specific location... The techniques include 'Three Elemental Technique', 'Offering Technique' and 'Realm Breaking Technique'... regardless, they are all inferior to obtaining a Realm Evidence!"

"Realm Evidence is something which obeys the rules of reality in that realm and is universally accepted everywhere in the realm. A person with Realm Evidence would automatically integrate with the realm and will have a high tolerance within the realm. It is something everyone would hope for but not everyone would get!"

Behind the description, there was a picture depicting how Realm Evidence would look like. There were talismans, swords or even an ordinary looking rock.

The only similarity between these objects was the fact that there would be many runes within it, which would inscribe the coordinates of the realm they were from.

"This..."

Reading this, Fang Yuan was speechless.

To him, Realm Evidence was the entry pass to everything and it would not matter how it physically looked like.

"From the appearance of the runes around it, it's likely that the

golden fruit has the coordinate of a realm!"

His eyes glittered. "No wonder it looked so confusing! I will need to express it in the form of a talisman in order to sieve out the coordinates of the realm and acceptance to the realm..."

Since he had just returned from dream-traversing, he would not immediately attempt it again.

Furthermore, he still needed to learn how to activate the coordinates and it was not something that he could achieve in a short period of time. Therefore, he left the Dream Realm promptly and arrived at the Qin Family's mansion, requested for a quiet place and started to execute his dream-accessing technique.

Although the Qin Family's mansion was protected by a protective array and had the protection of a few elders, Fang Yuan could still sneak in without anyone knowing that the Qin Siblings were his moles.

Very quickly, Qin Yun, who was doing some manual labour, felt sleepy and waved his hands. "I'm a little tired. I'll take a quick nap first, don't disturb me!"

"Yes, Sir!"

The servants were promptly dismissed as Qin Yun arrived at a reclining chair. With a yawn, he entered into a deep slumber.

In a bewildering fog, his body appeared and he noticed a young man in front. "Greetings, Sir!"

"Mm, please rise!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands. A stone table and two stone chairs suddenly rose, and there was a tea set on the table with brewed tea in it.

"Here!"

He quickly called Qin Yun to join him and poured a cup of tea for him. After all, he was a family head and he had to treat him like

one. "How's the investigation?"

Qin Yun took a small sip and was mesmerised by the fragrance of the tea.

He knew the prowess of a dream master and therefore was respectful. "I've got news regarding the Yang Family. They were originally the most influential family in their county but unknowingly, they were wiped out by Venerable Qing Gui!"

'Indeed, it happened!'

Fang Yuan nodded his head before continuing to probe further. "Did the imperial court investigate what happened?"

"Venerable Qing Gui was a dream master in the Illusionary Divine stage and was not easy to take control of him... Furthermore, he was from the Evil Divine Sect! Of course, it was necessary to go by the books and conduct the investigation, but as to how the investigations were being conducted... Hmm..."

Qin Yun shook his head and Fang Yuan was once again reminded of the power of dream masters in Da Qian Empire.

"As for the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique... The technique was the Yang Family's signature martial arts technique and would allow a martial artist to form 8 spiritual meridians and condense the Divine Body. It is considered rather powerful and after circulation, most families would have parts of the recordings regarding the technique. However, most parts only record up to forming the 8 meridians. As for the entire recordings, after my investigations, they should be in the hands of the Ruan Family!".

"Ruan Family?"

Fang Yuan's eyebrows twitched. Never would he have guessed that the Qin Family would be so efficient in their investigations.

"That's right! The Ruan Family is related to the Yang Family through marriage. On the day of the downfall of the Yang Family, one of the elders was severely injured but managed to escape. He

was rescued by the Ruan Family but unfortunately, could not be treated. With that, he passed on and the entire recordings of the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique now lie in the hands of the Ruan Family!"

Qin Yun continued. "Ruan Family is situated in Victorious East Region, Yiwu County. It is two regions away from Sand Region. Sir, do you need directions there?"

The Da Qian Empire was vast and many times larger than Yuan and Wu Country.

"No need!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands. He started to miss the flying beasts he had back at home.

"Wait a moment..."

His expression changed. "There seems to be a hiring service in the Dream Realm. I can directly hire a spiritual bird to bring me to Victorious East Region, and this idea seems possible..."

However, there was also such a service provided in Sand Region. The only difference was that the type of birds used was weaker, slower and easily tracked down.

Without another word, he left.

In the Qin Family's mansion, Qin Yun slowly woke up and was deep in his thoughts.

...

With a target in mind, Fang Yuan quickly put up a mission request in the Dream Realm.

There was no difficulty in this mission. It only required the person to ferry him. Therefore, he only offered 10 contribution points. Even so, there were quite a lot of people interested in taking up the mission.

After browsing through a number of interested dream masters,

he chose a dream master's symbol of which he deemed that the dream master was not too powerful.

This person which he had chosen was respectful and mentioned that he had a spiritual bird comparable to a Wu Zong and could fly undetected.

Most importantly, he was geographically near this dream master!

After a few words, they had agreed to meet up.

After 2 hours, on a peak in Dongyi County, a giant spiritual bird landed amidst the gushing wind.

This spiritual bird resembled an eagle and had golden feathers and two heads. It was a Golden Double-headed Eagle and was ferocious in nature. It was rumoured that this bird would be able to obtain elemental force at maturity and even have wind and fire abilities. The strongest among these birds would be comparable to a spiritual knight in the Elemental Opening realm or a Wu Zong in the Meridian Opening realm.

"Greetings, senior Fang!"

As the double-headed eagle landed, a young man walked down from the back of the eagle and greeted Fang Yuan.

"Mmm, you're Huo Qing?"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. "Based on the agreement, I'll pay you half of the amount, and after ferrying me to Yiwu County in Victorious East Region, I'll pay you the remaining half. Is that right?"

"That's right!"

Hua Qing invited Fang Yuan up the back of the eagle. Within seconds, the double-headed eagle had flown into the clouds.

"Chirp!"

The double-headed eagle let out a long chirp, forming a green sphere which covered its body, blocking the wind.

"Senior, please enjoy!"

On the spacious back of the eagle, Huo Qing had prepared tea and snacks. "We'll arrive there in a day's time after crossing two regions, please be patient!"

"You are meticulous..."

Fang Yuan looked into Huo Qing's eyes and realised that he was an elementary dream master in the realm of dream-accessing.

Of course, considering his age, he was already a talent.

The only thing was that there was a big gap between his cultivation and Fang Yuan's, which was why it was still appropriate for him to address Fang yuan as a senior.

"This double-headed eagle is rather good. If it was me, I think I would be unable to tame such a quick spiritual bird..."

After a while, Fang Yuan complimented him.

"You're right, senior!"

Huo Qing was careful with his words. "There are lots of dangers within these two regions that we are crossing. Even though we're high up in the sky, we still have to be careful... Furthermore, we will be flying across county cities, district towns and even some influential and powerful families. Therefore we have to avoid them... I am useless and can only rely on this to make a living..."

Hearing his explanation, Fang Yuan was shocked.

He never knew that Da Qian Empire would be so advanced to the point of even protecting their own airspaces.

If he were to capture any random spiritual bird and flew across, he would invite trouble for himself.

Of course, from this, he could also understand why Huo Qing was doing this.

Huo Qing had painstakingly tamed a Golden Double-headed

Eagle, remembered the air routes and made a living from ferrying people to places. From offering such services for hire, he would be able to earn contribution points to exchange for resources in the Dream Realm.

If Fang Yuan was a native from the Da Qian Empire without any special skills, after becoming a dream master, he would probably take the same route and depend on a skill to save up in order to achieve a breakthrough in the future.

"Not bad... not bad at all!"

The journey was a smooth one and the land below started to turn green with vegetation. As the mountainous regions approached, Fang Yuan knew that they had entered Victorious East Region. Suddenly, he enquired. "With such an ability, have you thought of expanding? For instance, establishing an association and offering your services to everybody?"

"Keke..."

Huo Qing laughed. "I am a dream master! How can I serve mortals? Furthermore... they cannot afford to hire me!"

Fang Yuan remained silent.

Even elementary dream masters would have the pride of dream masters in Da Qian Empire.

Remaining silent, they quickly arrived at Yiwu County. On a plateau, Huo Qing ordered the double-headed eagle to land, and Fang Yuan dismounted.

"Senior, are you here for your private affairs and that you don't want anybody to know about it?"

Huo Qing stroked the double-headed eagle's feathers and fed it a spiritual fruit. "If you want to return, you can look for me! Little Golden and I are capable of evading the spiritual air soldiers!"

As he spoke, there was a sense of pride coming from him.

Chapter 252: Kidnap

'There are air soldiers patrolling the air in Da Qian?'

Fang Yuan had picked out a different meaning from Huo Qing's words and became more alert.

After all, to have control over the vast area and be blessed by the heavens, the Imperial Court would surely have this ability!

Even though he was the Eagle Lieutenant in Yang Fan's dream world, he still did not know everything.

At this point in time, he could slowly understand the power of Da Qian.

"Only dream masters would be able to fight against dream masters... I'm afraid that as Feng Xinzi described the 5 most powerful organisations in Da Qian, he left out the Imperial Court!"

Fang Yuan waved goodbye to Huo Qing and entered Yiwu County.

...

In Yiwu County, the Ruan Family was considered one of the influential families.

In history, after receiving the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique from the Yang Family, everyone in the Ruan Family, be it elders or disciples, received a boost in their martial arts skills. From there, they had produced two elders in the Meridian Opening Realm, which secured their standing in the county.

Of course, there were rumours that the reason why the Ruan Family could become so powerful in such a short time was not only due to the fact that they had the Yang Family's martial arts, but they also had a secret vault! This made the Ruan Family, without a doubt, one of the most powerful families in the region.

However, by now, after many years, the rumour had started to go

away.

After all, which family could climb up and rise in influence without killing and sacrificing others? How many innocent people were harmed along the way?

Since they were being suspected of wrongdoings, they would not harp on it. Slowly, the people in the county would forget about their deeds and would take them for a kind and pure family.

To others outside the county, they would appear to be a legitimate strong family.

In the Ruan Family's mansion study.

The current family head of Ruan Family was Ruan Ming. He was in his fifties and was a Wu Zong. He knew how to take care of his body well and therefore only appeared to be in his thirties. He closed his eyes as he listened intently to his subordinates report the accounts.

"In the East City, we have earned 2,000 elemental crystals. They have been kept in the main vault!"

"The business in the few shops within the city are stabilising. Every month, they would bring 500 elemental crystals. According to your wishes, we have already sent them to Young Master Junxian!"

...

The few housekeepers knew the family head's temper and were all respectful. In the process, they casually mentioned a young master's name.

"Mmm, Junxian is gifted and is the hope of our family... we cannot stop supporting him!"

As he mentioned his son, he slowly opened his eyes, revealing a look of joy.

He had 3 sons and 5 daughters. Most of them were average but

Ruan Junxian was gifted in martial arts. He started at the age of 3 and achieved a breakthrough to the Pain Gate at the age of 8, obtaining inner force. Now, he was 16 and was already at the peak of the 12th Gate. He had entered 'Thousand Year Mountain', a big sect in Victorious East Region. There were rumours that he was the most gifted there and was treated especially well.

However, Ruan Ming knew that establishing good relations was extremely important. Even though he was inside a big sect, he still needed a continuous supply of resources.

As a family head, Ruan Ming was restricted in many ways and could only help him within his boundaries.

"Family Head, we have good news!"

At this point in time, a guard came in and knelt down on one knee with a joyous look on his face. "Young Master Junxian has written back! He will be leaving the sect with his master, 'Black Tiger Taisui' and will be around Yiwu County in the next few days to come!"

"Haha... Good news indeed!"

Ruan Ming stood up. "Pass down the instructions to make preparations... Black Tiger Taisui is not only a Wu Zong in the Meridian Opening stage but also Junxian's master. We cannot show him any disrespect!"

This He Shantong, the Black Tiger Taisui, was a person of high status in Thousand Year Mountain and legend has it that he had already formed 5 spiritual meridians and the Sixth Elemental Force! In the Tiger Ranks, he was ranked 87th in the whole of Victorious East Region!

Victorious East Region was a region filled with martial artists and therefore had a ranking system of the Tiger Ranks and Dragon Ranks.

To be ranked, one had to be younger than 40 years of age and be

at least a Wu Zong. To be highly ranked, one had to at least be in the Meridian Opening stage.

As for the Dragon Ranks, it was mostly unchanged. Only people who had formed all the spiritual meridians and condensed the Divine Body would be able to enter.

For He Shantong to be in the Tiger Ranks meant that he was indeed highly skilled.

Although the Ruan Family had three elders in the Meridian Opening stage, none of them was in the ranks.

...

Outside the Ruan Family, Fang Yuan casually picked up a guard and flung him away, getting what he wanted.

"The Ruan Family is similar to the Yang Family. They pass down their martial arts based on the status of the family members. I'm afraid only the family head and the three elders know about the entire recordings..."

At this point in time, Fang Yuan was still not skilled enough to just barge in a powerful family like the Ruan Family.

More importantly, after getting what he came for, it would be hard for him to escape the surrounding guards.

Furthermore, there might be countless arrays protecting the family's mansion or secret weapons. After all, this was not Yuan or Wu Country. Any wrong step would lead to him being captured.

"In order for the plan to work, I'll have to lure the snake out... That'll be the beloved son of the Ruan Family, Ruan Junxian, right?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin as his eyes glittered.

He never thought of the possibility of a trade. How would such a powerful and influential family easily give up their secret martial arts technique? Even if they were agreeable to a trade, Fang Yuan

could most possibly be unable to afford it, or rather, unwilling to pay for it.

"Ranked 87th in the Tiger Ranks, He Shantong, the Black Tiger Taisui... Keke..."

As he looked towards a random direction in the city, he chuckled.

...

In the forest, the surroundings were peaceful.

Along a path, a carriage was slowly advancing.

The carriage did not appear luxurious, but in fact, it was made from Thousand Year Bronze Wood and was less bumpy. There was a mild fragrance within the carriage.

The person who was riding the horse pulling the carriage was around 15 years old.

"Junxian, there's no need to rush. Yiwu County is just ahead."

As the curtains were drawn, He Shantong, the Black Tiger Taisui was chuckling.

"When we return home, I'll give you the best reception, master!"

Ruan Junxian was smart. As he commented, He Shantong started to laugh happily.

After laughing, his face turned serious. "Do you know the task given to us by the sect?"

"I know, to destroy the Li Family! Leave no stones unturned!"

Ruan Junxian was young. As he mentioned this, he felt a little bad.

"To be honest, the Li Family are not evil. However, of all people, they had to offend us. If we do not teach them a lesson, other families would think that they can climb all over our heads, and it will be hard for us to do what we need to do in the future..."

He Shantong started to share his own experience.

"Master... I've learnt!"

Ruan Junxian clenched his teeth. "The strong will kill the weak, and this has been true since the beginning of mankind... Even our Ruan Family could only grow at the expense of other families!"

"Very good! You're rather smart for someone who had been doing martial arts for your lifetime!"

He Shantong praised him.

He had never said such words to other disciples before, but now, he had said it to Ruan Junxian. From the first time he saw Ruan Junxian, he was already beginning to feel bias towards him, and even he could not believe himself.

"Based on our sect rules, since this is your first mission, I am only allowed to supervise you, of course... if you can get external help, that will not be flouting the rules..."

As he changed the topic, he started to give tips to Ruan Junxian.

Ruan Junxian was listening intently when suddenly, the horse came to a halt.

"What happened?"

The young man tumbled down from the horseback and quickly looked in front.

All he could see was a man in white blocking the path of the carriage.

The two horses pulling the carriage were frightened and refused to budge.

"Stay behind me!"

He Shantong appeared serious as he pulled Ruan Junxian to one side.

"I am He Shantong from the Thousand Year Mountain. May I know who you are?"

Looking at the young man in front, he could only feel a fleeting feeling as though he was connected to the heavens and earth, making his heart shudder.

Based on his many years of experience, it was extremely rare to meet a cultivator with such a spiritual aura.

"Black Tiger Taisui?"

Fang Yuan examined the martial artist who was ranked in the Tiger Ranks.

He was a skinny person with a tanned face and a pair of burning eyes. With a smile, he continued. "You're just like that?"

"It seems that you are here for revenge?"

He Shantong slowly walked out of the carriage, with a strong and pressurising spiritual aura.

He did not ask Fang Yuan the reason why he was here, for he knew that he had countless enemies.

Furthermore, other than enemies, there could be other people looking for trouble as well.

"That's true... and false at the same time!"

Fang Yuan went straight to the point. "If you are willing to lend me Yuan Junxian for a few days, we can avoid the fight. Wouldn't it be a win-win situation?"

"Without considering the fact that he is my disciple, but the fact that he is a disciple of the Thousand Year Mountain would mean that I would lose my face if I were to let you take him away from me!"

He Shantong smiled and took in a deep breath.

"Whooo!"

Suddenly, the muscles in his body bulged and he became taller. Within seconds, he had transformed from a bony person to a tall

and well-built man.

Not just that, his skin had turned black like metal and two sharp fangs grew out from his mouth, as though a tiger had possessed him.

Black Tiger Taisui was indeed powerful!

"Master's Seven Star Black Tiger Transfiguration?!"

Ruan Junxian turned pale. Never would he have thought that his master would use his most powerful move in the opening!

"OH? Not too bad! Let me test you out!"

Fang Yuan slowly walked out and casually struck out a punch.

"Whooo!"

A gust of wind blew and the sand was drifting.

"First Star! Second Star! Third Star! Open!"

He Shantong exclaimed as three spiritual meridians formed behind his back, forming the shape of constellations. With that, he pounced towards Fang Yuan.

"Rumble!"

As their fists met, both of them were forced a few steps backwards.

"Fourth Elemental Force? Not bad!"

Fang Yuan shook his numb arm. "You're stronger than me before I open my spiritual meridians!"

With his Wu Zong cultivation, Giant Eagle Metal Body and Hundred Poison Golden Body, he was still weaker than his adversary.

"Before opening your spiritual meridians? Meridian Opening Wu Zong?"

Ruan Junxian covered his gaping mouth. In the next moment, he

could see three thick spiritual meridians forming behind Fang Yuan's back, forming a spiritual armour. He also grew a pair of eagle wings and claws.

"Giant Eagle Claw!"

"Fourth Star! Fifth Star! Open!"

"Bang!"

In a loud bang, five constellations appeared behind He Shantong's back. With that, he pitted his Sixth Elemental Force against the eagle's claw.

In a red flash, he flew back with a sword wound on his chest.

In a single move, He Shantong, the Black Tiger Taisui who was ranked 87th in the Tiger Ranks, was defeated!

Chapter 253: Facade

In the Ruan Family.

The servants were all busy setting up tables full of delicacies in preparation for the dinner.

Ruan Ming was in the living room. As he paced around, there was a worried look on his face. "Why are they not here yet? Look for them!"

"Yes, Sir!"

A few housekeepers agreed and were promptly dismissed.

Not long after, the head housekeeper frantically ran into the mansion. As he did, he clumsily tripped over a step and knocked his forehead into the ground, grazing it. "Family Head, someone delivered a letter together with Young Master's jade!"

Ruan Ming's heart skipped a beat as he composed himself and took the letter.

"What audacity..."

There were only a few words in the letter. After reading it, his right hand started to shiver. "This person has kidnapped Junxian and want us to bring the Yang Family's Green Blooded Qilin!"

The few housekeepers remained silent.

The Green Blooded Qilin was a treasure of the Ruan Family. It was a jade figure which had extraordinary properties of strengthening bones, enhancing elemental force and was an antidote to many types of poison.

"Who could it be? Guo Family? Li Family?"

Ruan Ming paced around. "This is an emergency. If the enemy could get hold of Junxian, this must mean that he had defeated He Shantong, the Black Tiger Taosui. When did the Ruan Family get ourselves such a strong enemy?"

He wouldn't believe that people would go after their family merely for the riches.

"It's alright, let me consult the few elders!"

He was a decisive person and went straight to the patriarchal hall.

As the few housekeepers exchanged glances, they all knew that the family head was decided. He would surely save Young Master Junxian. After all, he was not only his biological son but also the entire hope of the family's future.

In the patriarchal hall of the Ruan Family.

It was peaceful and surrounded by a few plots of spiritual farms filled with unique flowers and plants.

At the boundary of the spiritual farm, there were a few straw huts. Three old men who looked like farmers were sitting within as they smoked and drank tea.

"Greetings elders, I am the unfilial grandson, Ruan Ming!"

As soon as Ruan Ming arrived, he immediately knelt down and explained what had happened.

"We have seen Junxian before. He would surely be a Wu Zong in the Meridian Opening realm in the future and is the pillar of our family with potential to become stronger..."

As an elder emptied his smoke pot on a rock, he continued with a hoarse voice. "However, this time, our enemy is extremely strong. Even I myself don't have the confidence to defeat Black Tiger Taisui! It seems that we have to compromise... A human life is always more important. After all, it is just a mere Green Blooded Qilin!"

As they came to an agreement, the issue was settled.

"Mmm, we'll agree to this!"

The two elders by the sides nodded their heads in unison. "Just

remember that you're responsible for this!"

"Of course!"

Ruan Ming replied respectfully. If not for the fact that the elder head and he shared the same heritage, he could not have resolved this easily.

"This is no big issue..."

The other two elders agreed to the arrangement. "You'll go by yourself and we will follow behind you secretly, hehe... I'll want to see what kind of god is he?"

"I'm afraid that the enemy will be prepared. Just in case, we should immediately inform Thousand Year Mountain!"

Ruan Ming quipped.

Thousand Year Mountain was an influential organisation in the Victorious East Region, and was led by a highly skilled martial artist ranked in the Dragon Ranks!

"That's true... After all, Black Tiger Taisui and Junxian are both from Thousand Year Mountain!"

In terms of influence, Thousand Year Mountain would be much stronger compared to the tiny Ruan Family, which was why the three elders agreed to it. "Although help might not come in time, it is still better than nothing!"

...

After half a day on Bull's Head Mountain.

Based on Fang Yuan's requirement, Ruan Ming had to personally deliver the goods.

In reality, this was all a facade.

The Green Blooded Qilin was randomly mentioned. With such a short time given, the Ruan Family had to personally come and could not plan for anything. This was Fang Yuan's motive.

On a plateau, he could see three people walking towards him. The one in front was Ruan Ming.

Behind him were two old-looking elders with powerful spiritual auras. Both of them were Wu Zongs in the Meridian Opening realm.

As for the elder head? He was guarding at home.

After all, it could be a trick to lure all of them out. The mansion was important and they had to guard it.

"Father..."

Ruan Junxian followed behind Fang Yuan with a desolate face. His martial arts were sealed but he was not severely injured. He was carrying an unconscious He Shantong.

As he saw Ruan Ming arrive, he called out to him but subsequently felt ashamed.

"Junxian, how are you and your master?"

Seeing this, Ruan Ming could only sigh.

"I'm alright and master is only slightly injured.... This person is a 3rd Meridian Wu Zong, be careful, Father!"

Ruan Junxian looked at Fang Yuan and exclaimed.

Who knew that Fang Yuan would completely ignore him? Fang Yuan looked at the family head of the Ruan Family. "You are Ruan Ming? Very well! Have you brought what I have asked for?"

"I've brought it!"

Ruan Ming opened his cloth bag. Inside, there was a green and red-coloured figure of a Qilin and it was glittering.

"Wait up!"

Seeing Fang Yuan approach him, Ruan Ming took a step back and raised the Green Blooded Qilin high up in the air. "I'll pass you the goods, but you'll pass me the person! If you dare to try anything

funny, I'll destroy this treasure and the Ruan Family will forever be against you!"

"Hmmm... Whatever!"

Fang Yuan sighed and pushed Ruan Junxian forward.

As they approached each other, the two elders behind Ruan Ming started to muster their elemental force, making the situation rather tense.

In the vicinity, everyone was extremely tensed up.

Just as Ruan Junxian was halfway from reaching his father, something happened!

With a snicker, Fang Yuan executed his shadowstep and came in front of Ruan Ming, striking a claw out!

"What a thief!"

Ruan Ming glanced at him and mustered his elemental force as he was about to destroy the Green Blooded Qilin.

Beside him, the two elders exclaimed and struck the force of their spiritual meridians out.

All of this was planned before. If Fang Yuan wanted to snatch the Green Blooded Qilin, he would have to endure the strike from both Meridian Opening Wu Zongs! It was the perfect plan!

With a sinister smile, Fang Yuan dodged them.

"Bang!"

Unable to do anything, the Green Blooded Qilin was shattered to pieces as Ruan Ming was left stunned.

"Haha... Do you really think I'm after this thing?"

With a laugh, he pointed his right index finger out and a red sword essence appeared.

A sword's essence would strike as far as 30,000 miles, and a sword's radiance would blind 19 regions!

"Ah!"

The fight between highly skilled martial artists would mean that any mistakes would lead to the outcome of the fight. As the two Wu Zongs had predicted Fang Yuan's intentions wrongly, they had to dodge the sword essence with much embarrassment.

They were inferior to Fang Yuan from the beginning and now, they were panicking.

"Stay down!"

Behind Fang Yuan, his spiritual meridians formed and transfigured into a spiritual armour covering his whole body. As he came closer, he struck a claw out at Ruan Ming.

Under the attack of Sixth Elemental Force, being a normal Wu Zong, Ruan Ming could only do so much. Even after the Second Elemental Force exploded from his Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique, it was not enough. His neck was gripped on and his mind went blank.

"Father!"

Within seconds, Fang Yuan had already forced the two Meridian Opening Wu Zongs back and had captured Ruan Ming.

Ruan Junxian's expression changed as his eyes became bloodshot.

He finally understood that Fang Yuan had only revealed his Meridian Opening cultivation to him for him to trick his few elders and immediately felt regretful.

He never knew that this young man would be so dangerous!

"Mmm... It's just another two Meridian Opening Wu Zongs. Why not take both of them with me as an assurance!"

After capturing Ruan Ming, Fang Yuan glared at the other two elders, and they could sense danger in his eyes.

It was an unplanned surprise for him to be able to capture so

many members of the Ruan Family.

"Thief!"

At this moment, there were sounds coming from the foot of the mountain, and a group of people were arriving.

The person leading the pack was an old man with white hair. Behind the old man, there were 6 spiritual meridians forming, making him appear like a giant.

"Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique? This must be the elder head to have reached such a level of cultivation! He should be in the Tiger Ranks!"

Fang Yuan was mildly shocked. As he looked at the group of people behind, he noticed that someone was pointing at him.

As vibrations from their voices spread, Fang Yuan became aware of what was happening. Outside his actualised dream world, a grey fog was attempting to enter.

"Buzz!"

In the next moment, the 8 Gates Sword Array shook and the red sword essence flashed around, reducing the grey fog to nothing.

"A curse master?! Or a dream master?"

Fang Yuan smiled. With the protection of the soul in his actualised dream world, it was an extremely effective defence against attacks from spiritual wills. This was especially so for fights among dream masters, as the main battleground would be in their actualised dream worlds.

As he looked down, he realised that most of them were spitting out blood.

"They have indeed called for reinforcements. These should be the highly skilled people in Yiwu County... forget it!"

He did not want to continue fighting and promptly left.

After all, he had already gotten what he wanted.

Furthermore, although there were only a few highly skilled people in Yiwu county, they would still give him trouble if they combined forces.

"Go!"

Before he left, he flicked his finger out. Suddenly, there appeared another sun in the sky. The sword essence from the red sword was like the brilliance from the sun. As it shone down, it seeped through the vegetation and rocks and blocked the group of people who were giving chase.

Everyone was shocked at slowed down as they witnessed Fang Yuan escaping into the woods.

"Brother!"

As the two elders saw the elder head, they were embarrassed.

"Who would've guessed that that crazy person was after Ruan Ming!"

The elder head gave a cold look. "Although I had already rushed here, it seems like I was a little late!"

Without caring about Ruan Junxian, he looked at the people behind. "How is Brother Qing Yun?"

"That person cultivates in both spiritual techniques and martial arts and has an extremely powerful spiritual will. Brother Qing Yun initially wanted to cast a spell to confuse him, but little did he know that he would experience backlash!"

A middle-aged woman shook her head. "When did your Ruan Family anger such a strong enemy? If I knew he would be so strong, I wouldn't have agreed to help out!"

"We're sorry about this!"

The elder head of Ruan Family gave a bitter smile. "I am also confused about this. However, rest assured that I will not get any

of you implicated in this. After this, we'll deliver gifts as a form of compensation!"

With this, the few highly skilled martial artists who had arrived to help out became a little more amiable, but in the elder head's mind, he had already vomited blood countless times.

Chapter 254: Lin Qianye

In the dense forest, Fang Yuan reached the depths of the mountains. As he released the sword essence, he carved out a cave and a stone bed before throwing Ruan Ming onto it.

"Dream accessing!"

As he spoke, his right index finger touched the area in between Ruan Ming's eyebrows.

It was a facade when Fang Yuan had requested for the Green Blooded Qilin. His real objective was to retrieve everything about the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique from this family head!

If he had requested this from the beginning, he would have given them time to prepare against him. After all, there were many dream masters in Da Qian and they could seal his memories.

Taking him by surprise would mean that although he would have some techniques to defend his own spiritual will, there was nothing that Fang Yuan had to fear.

Many years ago, he could already access the dream of a Wu Zong. Being a dream master in the Illusionary Divine stage, he could easily access Ruan Ming's dream, even if he was met with resistance.

"Mmm? There is indeed a seal in his memories. After all, as family head, he would know too many secrets and they had to take precautions..."

As Fang Yuan entered Ruan Ming's consciousness, he arrived at a golden lock which sealed up a bunch of secrets.

"The good thing was that he is unaware of my motive and therefore did not strengthen the defence. I can still break this with some time!"

With the wave of his hands, a fog appeared and it seeped into the

limbs of Ruan Ming.

Dream masters were skilled in manipulating spiritual wills and souls. At his current level of cultivation, it was not easy, but neither was it too hard to break through the seal. Fang Yuan had the confidence that he could do so.

...

Yiwu County.

"It is a revenge I must take against the person who captured my father!"

Ruan Junxian and Black Tiger Taisui had both recovered. There was hatred in Ruan Junxian's young eyes. "I want to search for that evil person and save father!"

"Don't spout nonsense!"

The Elder head was his great great grandfather. As he lectured him, he slapped him squarely in the face.

It was a distinct "Pa"!

"The only reason why your father would want to save you is that you are the future of our family!"

The Elder head appeared solemn. "If anything were to happen to him, you can still inherit his place and become family head. If you go and anything bad were to happen to you, who would take over the family?"

In the family, the fight to become family head was a fierce one.

If Ruan Junxian was around, he would only need a few years of training to officially become the family head and the other grandsons could not win the fight.

If he were to die while searching for his father, there would be no more heir and the First family would crumble.

"That person cultivates in both spiritual techniques and martial

arts, he might be a dream master!"

With a pale face, He Shantong the Black Tiger Taisui commented.

With this, the elder head of Ruan Family started to have goosebumps but forced a smile. "Daoist Qing Yun has also investigated and it seems that this is true... Unknowingly, our family has angered a strong enemy. We have done nothing but calamities keep coming to us..."

"Dream masters are mysterious and we'll have to slowly investigate. Elder head, please be assured that the Thousand Year Mountain will not be bullied. If he is not from the five strongest organisations, what do we have to fear?"

He Shantong rubbed his chest.

"That's right!"

A strong voice was heard, but it was as though it had come from a distance.

"Vice Sect Head?"

He Shantong quickly bowed and greeted, and Ruan Junxian did the same.

Although He Shantong was of a rather high status in Thousand Year Mountain, he knew that the most highly skilled person would be the sect head who was ranked in the Tiger Ranks. The second would be the Vice Sect Head, Lin Qianye. He has already formed 8 spiritual meridians and is one step away from condensing the Divine Body! He was ranked 5th in the Tiger Ranks!

"I am using the Thousand Mile Voice Technique to speak to all of you... That person is reckless and has infringed upon us, the Thousand Year Mountain... I will personally take over. If he has a backing, we will let him off with a small punishment, otherwise... It's not like I have not killed dream masters before!"

As they heard the cold voice, everyone in Ruan Family had joy all over their faces.

...

Within the cave.

Fang Yuan closed his eyes. The advanced techniques of Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique to condense a Divine Body was already in his consciousness.

"At the Wu Zong level, the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique can increase one's spiritual strength. From there, one can form 8 spiritual meridians and obtain the Tenth Elemental Force as they achieve the Giant Spiritual Divine Body. This is comparable to the Divine Body in martial arts. From there, one can cleanse their bones, purge their blood and transform from a mortal body to a new Divine Body. This is known as body forging! At this stage, martial artists would be strengthened in all aspects and martial arts would be an instinct to them. They would be comparable to spiritual knights and are known as True Divines!"

At this point, Fang Yuan had no doubts about the martial arts path in Da Qian.

From the beginning, there was the 12 Golden Gates. As one reaches Wu Zong, they would be able to obtain elemental force and continue on to Meridian Opening Stage, similar to spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Stage. In the end, the body would be forged into a True Divine!

This level of cultivation would be comparable to a high-tiered Illusionary Divine stage and considered highly skilled in Da Qian and be ranked on the Dragon Ranks in Victorious East Region!

Spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Realm would cultivate in spiritual points. As they improve in their cultivation, they would arrive at a True Elemental Realm which was comparable to the True Divine!

After all, Ruan Ming was the head of a big family and was a strong cultivator himself. Therefore, he knew quite a lot and in turn benefited Fang Yuan.

"A spiritual knight at the True Elemental Realm and a martial artist at True Divine would be rare highly skilled people in Da Qian. If they were placed somewhere else, they would be a true grandmaster!"

"With the complete recordings of Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique, there shouldn't be any problem for me to explore and discover the Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique to form the 8th meridian!"

There was a look of excitement on Fang Yuan's face.

Spiritual knights would train in their spiritual points while Wu Zongs would open their meridians. Although the end stage would be similar, the number of spiritual meridians or spiritual points formed would determine one's potential.

If there were loopholes in the techniques and the maximum spiritual meridians that could be attained was 6, then it would be impossible to enter the next stage.

For instance, the Seven Star Black Tiger Transfiguration performed by Black Tiger Taisui could only form a maximum of 7 spiritual meridians. Even if he were to condense the Divine Body, he could never match a Giant Spiritual Divine Body.

Comparatively, the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique could form 8 spiritual meridians. This was considered a relatively good technique in Da Qian.

"A true top-notch technique, regardless of forming spiritual points of spiritual meridians, would be able to form 9! 9 is the extreme number! If such a technique is used to achieve the True Elemental Realm or True Divine, it would be the most powerful!"

Fang Yuan was determined. "I cannot allow my Giant Eagle Metal

Body Technique to stop at the 8th meridian. It must be able to break through the last meridian to become perfect!"

He would either do it to perfection or forget about it. After all, he was a perfectionist.

Glancing at the rock bed, he could see a pale Ruan Ming. It was evident that he was injured, but it was not life-threatening.

After all, Fang Yuan was only here for the technique and not to wipe them out.

"Initially, I wanted to compensate you. However, since you have snatched this technique from the Yang Family, It is only karma that I am snatching this back. If you are not happy, I can't do anything about it..."

After reading through Ruan Ming's memories, Fang Yuan now knew that the uprising of Ruan Family was at the expense of Yang Family.

Even the elder from Yan Family who had come to look for them for help was captured and tortured to reveal the technique and the secret vault of the Yang Family.

From this, since he had Yang Fan's memories, it was justified if he were to destroy the Ruan Family.

Of course, Yang Fan did not help him to the extent that Fang Yuan would feel compelled to help him take revenge and wipe out the Ruan Family.

As Fang Yuan looked back, he quickly felt a sense of fear all around.

"They're already here?"

"And a highly skilled one too!"

As he walked out of the save, he saw a man in black.

The man was sitting on the branch of a pine tree and with the swaying of the branches, it appeared as though the man was as

light as a feather, but his spiritual aura was extremely pressurizing, which could easily confuse others.

"Are you the officials or part of the family? How did you find me?"

Looking at the person, Fang Yuan was shocked. Ultimately, Da Qian was very different from the mainland, where he could do anything he wanted. Now, after being reckless, people would be on his tail.

"I am Lin Qianye, the Vice Sect Head of Thousand Year Mountain! As for how I tracked you down, I'll let you know after you die!"

The man in black let out a sinister smile. He had a handsome face and an ivory white skin. As he smiled, he gave off the vibes of a poisonous snake.

"Whoosh!"

In his actualised dream world, the fire-type spiritual sword flickered and released its sword essence!

"Not good!"

With such a reaction from his instincts, Fang Yuan quickly retreated as a red sword sliced in front of his chest.

"Peng!"

A humongous force was felt. Even though he had the Sixth Elemental Force, he could not block the incoming force completely. With a sigh, the force struck his chest as he flew back.

Lin Qianye kept his fist. "A dream master indeed! Furthermore... You're in the Illusionary Divine stage!"

"8th meridian?"

As Fang Yuan flew backwards, a spiritual light glowed around him as he looked at the sword in his hands.

This fire-type divine soldier was able to counter even tribulations from the heavens and was therefore undamaged. However, his arm felt a little numb and if he countered with all his force, it would not end up favourable for him.

In front of him was a Wu Zong who had opened up 8 meridians!

Not just that, his spiritual meridians did not appear on his back but was all around his body forming a weird pattern. With such a humongous force, he already had half the power of what a Divine Body would have!

"Only with an extreme technique would you be able to achieve extreme cultivations?"

Martial arts in the extreme should not be belittled!

Of course, the power of dream masters was way beyond Wu Zongs. However, Fang Yuan's cultivation as a dream master was still too low.

Fang Yuan was able to be on par with Lin Qianye just by forming the Water Sword to form the Water-Fire Dual Sword Array. He did not even have to form all 8 swords.

Without another word, Fang Yuan quickly took his leave.

On him, as the Mountain River Pearl glittered, a pearl was being absorbed into his actualised dream world. It was the Freezing Pearl which he had obtained by luck in the Three World Mountain.

The Freezing Pearl was a water-type spiritual treasure with a hint of coldness. As the 8 Gates Sword Array shook, there was a blue glow creeping up on the water-type sword as it was slowly formed.

"You cannot run!"

Lin Qianye would not let Fang Yuan go. With a leap, he rushed forward and gave chase.

"Let the heavenly fire burn the ground!"

Fang Yuan wielded the red sword and as the sword essence

exploded, flames broke out everywhere, creating a burning inferno. "Ruan Ming is in the cave. If you want him dead, then continue to chase after me!"

Chapter 255: The Escape

Cliff Region.

This region was beside the Victorious East Region. The terrain was undulating and resembled a desert.

Because of the harsh environmental conditions, the people here were slightly more uncivilised and brave. Therefore, a culture of 'swordsman' was born, which was a different culture from the Dragon and Tiger Ranks in the Victorious East Region.

At this point in time, in the desert, two swordsmen were fighting.

As they were swordsmen, they wore bamboo hats and wielded swords. Their swordsmanship was superb and every strike was a deadly one.

"Long Xuanfeng, give up the treasured sword and I'll let you survive!"

A swordsman clad in white robes looked fierce with a long scar on his face. He was being surrounded by 10 other swordsmen.

Hearing the calls for him the surrender, he smiled as something glittered by his waist.

"Clang clang!"

As the swords sliced against each other, there was a distinct sound. Under the moonlight, many swords were broken into half, revealing the swordsmen's shocked faces.

Within seconds, there was a slit on each and every one of their necks as blood spurted out.

Killing 12 people in a single stroke!

After executing the secret technique, Long Xuanfeng took in a deep breath and looked at his treasured sword with joy. "Haha... with the help of Cold Moon, I can perfect the extreme sword

technique and become the most powerful in Cliff Region!"

"Whoooo!"

As a strong wind blew across, there were two black dots on the horizon.

The black dots were extremely quick and slowly, they became the silhouettes of two people.

"Mmm? Who's seeking death?"

As he was lost in his thoughts, Long Xuanfeng looked in the direction of the two silhouettes.

"Get lost, and don't be in the way!"

There was an impatient voice as a humongous force was felt. Without control, Long Xuanfeng fell backwards and the Cold Moon slipped out of his hands.

"Ahh... My treasured sword!"

As he exclaimed, he crawled to where the sword was. However, as he saw the Cold Moon stuck into the ground, there were 5 holes on it, allowing him to see through it.

...

"Lin Qianye, you're really persistent!"

Such a small distraction was unable to pique Fang Yuan's interest. As he looked at Lin Qianye who was giving chase, there was a look of fear on his face.

Previously, he had used Ruan Ming's life to threaten Lin Qianye for while.

After 2 hours, Lin Qianye began to catch up to him again.

Fortunately for him, he had cultivated in both spiritual technique and martial arts. Although he could not match up against Lin Qianye, he could still defend himself. Along the way, he had tried escaping and fighting back, and they had now entered

the Cliff Region.

By now, he had figured out how Lin Qianye could track him down.

"He should be tracking me down based on my spiritual aura... Is this his increased sensitivity since he is about to condense the Divine Body?"

He had tried to lose him multiple times but Lin Qianye had managed to catch up every single time. There was a menacing look in Fang Yuan's eyes.

In his actualised dream world, the Freezing Pearl had been fully absorbed and the Water Sword was halfway formed. There were also changes in his stats:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 33

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: Illusionary Divine (1st Tier), Wu Zong (3rd Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 4) (1%)], [Hundred Poison Golden Body (1st Refining)], [8 Gates Sword Array (2nd Sword) (30%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

'I can try using the water-type sword essence now!'

Fang Yuan seemed determined.

"You have violated the rules of our sect. We will hunt you down no matter where you go! Do you think you can be smug just because you're a dream master? I have killed dream masters before!"

The cold voice of Lin Qian Ye was heard. To him, it was a

surprise that this dream master had such a strong endurance.

The stronger his opponent was, the more determined he was to kill him!

This person had no backing and was not from the 5 powerful organisations. However, he was still strong and if left to survive, would bring them trouble in the future!

"Whoosh!"

As they continued the chase, soon after, they could hear the sound of water gushing through a river. Just across a cliff, there was a huge river which was connected to the ocean.

"We're here!"

Fang Yuan approached the cliff and leapt forward.

"Don't think of running away! Thousand Leaves Palm!"

Behind, Lin Qianye gave chase as multiple shadows of his palms appeared and covered the sky.

As Fang Yuan struck his palm downwards, water splashed out from the river and rained down like raindrops. "Watch out!"

As the water evaporated, a blue sword appeared and struck towards Lin Qianye.

"Eh?"

Lin Qianye had been fighting against the fire sword for quite a while. Now that the cold water-type sword appeared, there was a layer of frost on his hands and he panicked a little.

Of course, this was only because he was caught by surprise. As the spiritual inscriptions on his body glowed, the frost melted.

"Fire Sword!"

Fang Yuan could not let this opportunity slip by.

He had chosen this place to strike in order to make use of the water from the river to strengthen his Water Sword. Quickly, he

struck his Fire Sword out as well.

As the red sword combined with the blue sword, there was the force of an explosion. "Water-Fire Dual Sword Array! Explode!"

Of course, this was not the complete array. This was because the Water Sword had not been completely formed and was extremely unstable. However, Fang Yuan was leveraging on the instability of the Water Sword to result in the strongest possible explosion.

"Rumble!"

In mid-air, Lin Qianye could not dodge the sword and hand to counter it with his brute force.

"Whoosh!"

After the explosion, the red and blue sword essence dissipated, leaving the cliff with many holes.

In the mess, Lin Qianye got up to his feet and appeared extremely pale. As he clutched on to his chest, two open wounds started to bleed profusely.

"The spiritual aura is broken..."

As he took in a deep breath and glanced at the flowing river, there was a reverse in the flow of energy in his body as he spat out a mouthful of blood.

...

"Thousand Year Mountain... Lin Qianye?"

After three days, Fang Yuan had swum down the river and emerged from an underwater ice block. With an explosion, his body was revealed.

"I will take this revenge for I'm a gentleman!"

Looking in the upstream direction, he snickered and left.

With such a distance between the spiritual auras, Lin Qianye could no longer locate him.

At this point in time, his array was still incomplete. If he wanted to go against him head to head, he would still lose. Therefore, it would be wiser to take his revenge later.

"Now that the Thousand Year Mountain is investigating me, I should not return to Sand Region to bring trouble to the Qin Siblings..."

"Fortunately that is just one person, we'll see as the time goes..."

As he looked around, he realised that the place was very foreign.

After a long escape and swim through the river, he no longer knew the place.

"I should look for a place to settle down for the night before trying to train my martial arts and strengthened my sword array..."

Looking at the sun, he chose a direction and started to make his way. "Fortunately, I can access the Dream Realm anywhere in Da Qian, so it wouldn't make a difference wherever I go!"

Since he knew that he was still being chased after by Thousand Year Mountain and might have even caught the attention of the Imperial Court, he quickly changed his appearance and died his hair, adopting the look of a middle-aged man. Following the direction of the river, he arrived at a small town.

After casually looking for an inn to stay and finding out where this place was, he realised that the town was called Fengxiang, under the jurisdiction of the Ming Region.

Fang Yuan's fortune was all in the Mountain River Pearl. After another half a month's journey, he found a town and used his elemental crystals to purchase a small mansion.

Da Qian had quite a lot of control over the happenings in the whole empire. Regardless if it was buying a mansion or doing other stuff, if one did not have an identity, they would be noticed.

However, Fang Yuan's method was simple.

He looked for an average family and used his dream-accessing technique to alter their memories, allowing him to be recognised as a long-distance relative. Using elemental crystals and his relations with the people, he would be able to do anything and since he had no criminal records, the officials would not care that much as well.

The middle-aged man which Fang Yuan had transformed into had no criminal records and could therefore successfully purchase the mansion for him to take cover.

"Da Qian is different from other places. As long as I have elemental crystals, I can buy spiritual rice, spiritual vegetables and even spiritual water. They would even deliver it to my doorstep..."

After taking a look at the kitchen, Fang Yuan was extremely satisfied.

He would have hired a few servants, but he had too many secrets. Since this place was only a temporary holding place for him, he saw it as unnecessary trouble.

"To think about it... I have seen in the Dream Realm that the most suitable rice for dream masters would be Yellow Grain Rice, as in 'Yellow Grain in every dream'. Unfortunately, this type of spiritual rice would surely be at least a Mystery Grade and is rather rare. If I have a plot of spiritual land in the future, I could buy some from the Dream Realm to plant?!"

In the small town, the highest grade of rice that they would sell would only be of Yellow Grade, which was still sufficient for him to replenish his energy.

After a full meal, Fang Yuan entered the Dream Realm.

On the streets, there was a flash and Fang Yuan appeared.

"Victorious East Region, Thousand Year Mountain!"

As he arrived at the rock tablet, he paid a few contribution points and obtained some basic information.

"Thousand Year Mountain is an influential sect in the Victorious East Region. The sect head is Venerable Longhu who had cultivated in the 'Dragon Tiger Hell Guarding Formula'. It has the potential to open up to 8 spiritual meridians and form the Dragon Tiger Divine Body. That is its True Divine, and he is ranked 13th in the Dragon Ranks!"

"The Vice Sect Head is Lin Qianye and has a cultivation level of an 8th Meridian Wu Zong. He is trained in the Kurong Mysterious Technique and the Thousand Leaves Palm... he is ranked 5th in the Tiger Ranks!"

...

"With a True Divine leading the sect, it is indeed rather troublesome... If I were to hire a dream master of comparable capabilities, I might not be able to afford it."

As he thought about it, he contacted Feng Xinzi and briefly described the situation.

"Oh? Brother, you have angered the Thousand Year Mountain?"

This was a reaction he had expected. Feng Xinzi sounded calm, as though it was not a big deal.

After all, Da Qian was too huge and dream masters were able to travel everywhere. Who would be able to control the dream masters?

Needless to say, Feng Xinzi's backing was much stronger compared to Thousand Year Mountain.

"In fact, the Thousand Year Mountain is nothing much, except for Venerable Longhu. After all, he is a True Divine... Only 7th Tier Illusionary Divine dream masters would be able to deal with him!"

Feng Xinzi sighed.

The 7th Tier of Illusionary Divine was similar to the 7th spiritual meridian of Wu Zong and the 7th spiritual point of spiritual knights. However, the power of a 7th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master was much greater than the rest.

Fang Yuan was stunned. Even Feng Xinzi himself was only around the 3rd to 4th Tier in the Illusionary Divine stage. After all, doing alchemy to produce a spiritual pill was different from creating a conscious mind.

Spiritual pills were just a physical entity like a spiritual sword, unique in nature. However, a lifeform would be able to reproduce by itself and the difference between these two concepts was immeasurable.

Chapter 256: Reincarnation

"However, I have an idea to ensure your safety!"

On his jade inscription plate, Feng Xinzi's spiritual will was brimming with confidence.

"Oh? I'm willing to hear more about it!"

Fang Yuan smiled and could already guess what Feng Xinzi wanted to offer. After all, he had yet to achieve a breakthrough in alchemy and therefore could not have the ability to protect him. Therefore, it was likely that he was going to recommend Fang Yuan to whoever his backing was.

Indeed, Feng Xinzi continued. "The Thousand Year Mountain only dared to attack you because of the fact that you have no backing. The Realm Alliance is one of the five strongest organisations among the dream masters. If you are willing to join, looking at your potential and strength, you would surely be valued. What can the Thousand Year Mountain do to you?"

"My potential and strength?"

Fang Yuan was stunned as he slowly recalled

His performance was not striking in the Hui Realm, but at least it was comparable to the other experienced dream masters. Therefore, people would assume that he was hiding his true skill before the exploration mission.

'In fact, it was because they were limited by the difference in realms and could only restore half of their abilities while I was at my peak...'

Feng Xinzi was a 3rd to 4th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master and had only half of his abilities in the Hui Realm. On the other hand, he had used his full potential, and it was indeed similar. However, in reality, only Fang Yuan knew for himself the extent of his abilities.

'Unknowingly, I have now become a talent?'

As he smiled, he replied. "This is a big thing... Let me consider!"

"Of course. Know that the Realm Alliance has the least restrictions on dream masters. Furthermore, I will personally bring you through the alliance and therefore the path up will be much easier..."

Feng Xinzi mumbled on before cutting off.

"Most importantly... Although my potential is not bad, I have still yet to reach the stage of being an ultimate talent..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and let out a bitter laugh.

Feng Xinzi must have assumed that he was a talent.

"It is possible to be trained to such a level, but my cultivation now is still too low to think about it... I'm afraid that if I were to enter the Realm Alliance, I would lose self-control..."

"I need to train up!"

Fang Yuan walked out of the rock tablet square and arrived at a corner. "Realm Spirit, I want to apply for a void space to carry out the locating of another realm!"

"Ding! I have received your request and will deduct 100 contribution points!"

A cold and mechanical voice was heard. In the next moment, Fang Yuan found himself in an empty space with the surroundings sealed.

Based on the ability of the Realm Spirit, the void space which it had created would be strong enough to withstand the attacks of True Elemental spiritual knights and True Divine martial artists.

"Based on the description by Venerable Dream Traverser, the first step would be to have an empty space as a base. Of course, it is possible to do it in my actualised dream world as well but that would be putting my life at risk. It would be safer to do it in the

Dream Realm!"

With the flip of his hand, a golden fruit was revealed. Around the fruit, there were chunks of golden runes around it, which made it look mysterious.

However, he knew that this was not a real fruit but the coordinates for another realm, and it was merely taking up the physical shape of something else.

"Dream-traversing to other worlds would still be the fastest way to train up!"

Fang Yuan's previous rewards made him wanted to try again.

Furthermore, he could tell that the entire Da Qian was heavily monitored. Without a certain level of ability, his reckless actions would only attract the attention of the powerful and lead to his death.

Compared to this, dream-traversing to other realms was less troublesome. If he was lucky, he would reap a lot of rewards and it was worth a try!

"I am not hoping that I would find the source of dream masters. I am only hoping that I will arrive at a realm similar to the Hui Realm so that I can gain some realm energy and form a few more swords and I'll be satisfied..."

Looking around at the surroundings, Fang Yuan hesitated no more. He followed Venerable Dream Traverser's description and started to poke at the golden fruit.

"Rumble!"

As the golden fruit shook, golden flames started to burn it. The runes slowly came together and circled the fruit like a river. Suddenly, it exploded and formed a door frame.

With a force similar to a black hole, Fang Yuan's body was sucked towards it.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan wanted to slowly experience the feeling. However, he quickly became dizzy and a huge force which penetrated the realms was felt. His mind almost stopped.

After a long while, he opened his eyes and a new world laid before him.

...

This was a world full of water.

There were rivers and streams, lakes and oceans covering the whole world. There was very little land as they were all submerged under all the water in the realm.

In mid-air, it was concentrated with natural elemental energy. Of course, in his own world, it would be known as spiritual energy.

On the 3rd day of the 7th month, there was a slight drizzle.

As the mist dissipated, there were huge water droplets which condensed on the lotus leaves. As the water droplets trickled down and into the lake, small waves were created

"Whoosh!"

A mild wind blew across and as the lotus leaves swayed in the wind, a bluish-green ocean stretched to the horizon, combining seamlessly with the sky.

There was a splash as a black carp leapt out of the water.

"Mmm... it seems that this is not just a large pond, but a lake!"

In the black carp, Fang Yuan's released his spiritual will, not knowing if he should laugh or cry. "Who would've guessed... In this world, animals are the ones ruling it and therefore, I have become an animal as well!"

To him, this was nothing much. After all, he had such experiences in previous dream-accessing moments. Quickly, he

adapted to having no hands and legs as he trained by swimming in the water just by using his body.

After exploring, he was clear about where he was.

He was in a big lake which stretched across a large area and he was possessing a black carp not longer than a foot. If he were to be caught, he could make the perfect meal.

There was a saying among the animals in Da Qian. "Carps have hard fins, teeth, whiskers and are not the ideal meal!"

With black scales, this was about how Fang Yuan appeared now.

Furthermore, this water realm seemed to have more dangers than he could imagine.

All around there were ferocious fishes and water beasts. Even in the vicinity of the lotus flowers, it was not any safer.

To think about it, even for such a small fish, it could have its own spirituality. This might be attributed to the concentrated natural elemental energy in the environment.

"Since I'm a fish, I am the ruler of the waters! Let's get to the task at hand, which is to train up!"

Fang Yuan came to the lotus leaves and concealed himself in the shadows of the leaves.

"Big fishes will eat small fishes, small fishes will eat shrimps and shrimps will eat dirt! I am rather small and should try eating shrimps to fill my belly..."

Fang Yuan comforted himself for the fact that he did not possess a shrimp and therefore did not have to eat dirt.

Furthermore, the shrimps in the river were fat and delicious and it would be alright to eat them raw.

As he came to a spot, he quickly swallowed a few shrimps, controlled his energy and attempted to eat another two small fishes which were smaller than the size of the baby finger. With a

mouthful, he slowly digested them.

After a satisfactory burp, he came to a slit in a rock to rest and started to explore his body.

"Stats!"

With just a thought, a window appeared:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: [Black Carp (10 Years)]

Essence: 0.3

Spirit: 0.3

Magic: 3.3

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: ???

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

...

"Alright, since I'm a fish, I should be fortunate to preserve 10% of my initial magic proficiency points..."

After looking at his stats board, Fang Yuan was speechless.

With the unique ability to fix his stats, he could quickly restore his abilities.

However, how could a fish train? This was a worthy question.

"Since I have the most magic points, I am most suitable to be a dream master and train techniques which would require my essence and magic!"

The good thing was that he was experienced. Regarding his predicament, he could quickly come to a conclusion. "Furthermore, it is unsuitable for me to train like a human and therefore I cannot restore my old techniques. However, I did

discover a few techniques in the Golden Dragon God's palace the other time. Although this realm is different from that, the differences are minute and I should be able to train them!"

"Of course, based on my current situation, I should hide. Otherwise, it would be wasteful if a big fish were to come along and swallow me up..."

Fang Yuan was determined.

At this moment, a strong current was felt as the river tumbled into an ocean, disrupting everything beneath the water.

"What is this?"

A strong force was felt underwater. This was the demonstration of power from the strong to the weak, as though the powerful beings were calling the weaker ones to gather.

Beneath the lotus flower, back black carps, red carps, grass fishes, water snakes, shrimps and crabs and a few other entirely new species appeared, forming up a line.

On the lake, there was a golden wave. A few ten thousand carps had formed a line and became a wave which shimmered on the surface of the lake.

"The Water God is calling for us!"

In the water current, a green-faced water guardian appeared with huge clams under its feet and a double-headed spear in his hands. With big eyes, a wide mouth and a toad's face, it grabbed onto a few huge fishes and poked them.

The poked fishes tumbled and started to grow hands and legs, somewhat resembling a human. The only thing was that they had a weird appearance and scaly skin.

"Transformation?"

With a strong spiritual will, Fang Yuan was still in control of his body as he hid in the slit of the rock. As he witnessed the scene

before him, he started to laugh.

This transformation method was used by demons to strengthen their subordinates and servants. Their methods were ruthless and imperfect. The animals which they transfigured would appear ferocious-looking and would lose a part of their spirituality! They would have to be a servant for life.

'If the river gods were the ones transfiguring, I could still consider, but you are just a water guard...'

As he thought to himself, he hid deeper into the slit.

"I, the Qi Lake Water God, have completed my cultivation. As to who will now own Qi Lake, it is up to fate..."

After a long while, a loud and powerful voice was heard.

"Qi Lake Water God? It seems that he is the God of this place. Completed his cultivation? Is he going to the heavens after this?"

As Fang Yuan made wild guesses, he noticed the golden glow dissipating and the water creatures started to swim away. He decided to be a cowardly tortoise.

With his current abilities, even if he were to gain rewards, it would be almost impossible for him to take it. Instead, he might even lose his life.

Rather than risking his life, he would rather quietly hide and train.

Chapter 257: 9 Transformations

Qi Lake, within the Lotus Region.

All the fishes were feasting as autumn arrived in order to stock up food for the winter.

The lotus leaf rustled as a ferocious black shadow appeared. It revealed its sharp fangs as it swiftly bit a water snake into two and devoured it.

Blood flowed as the ferocious aura caused the surrounding aquatic animals to flee.

This black shadow ate quickly, ferociously and greedily. It had just finished devouring the water snake before it set its eyes on the surrounding fishes and shrimps. With a wave of its tail, it gave chase, causing droplets of water to splash everywhere and startling a flock of seagulls.

"Eat! Eat again! My newly improved 'Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula' is most suitable for the water dwellers to cultivate. The first phase is to increase the appetite and increase the digestive abilities. This is to accumulate spiritual energy through constantly eating!"

This black carp was naturally Fang Yuan.

At this moment, he took another look at his stats:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: [Black Carp (20 years)]

Essence: 3.6

Spirit: 3.6

Magic: 4

Profession:???

Cultivation:???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula (1st Transformation)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

This type of stats was considered not bad within the small Lotus Region. Coupled with the previous few months of stuffing himself with food, his body had grown to 3 feet long which was around 1 metre. He could now be considered a fish monster.

Of course, in this realm where all sorts of monsters and demons existed, his type of monstrosity could not make it to the list.

"20 years? It seems that the years at the back does not represent age but rather power?"

Fang Yuan had a realization.

The stat window was fixed. If he was reborn as a person, he would be able to return to his peak if he managed to regain his skills!

Furthermore, as a unique beast, before he reached the peak of his stats, he would not experience a bottleneck and as such, could raise his power crazily the whole way.

"This Nine steps of Dragon Transformation Technique is a technique which I obtained from the Golden Dragon God's Palace and is most suitable for black carps. There are a total of nine steps and the first 3 transformations are carp transformations followed by the black snake transformation, the python transformation, the giant venomous snake transformation, the horned dragon transformation, the water dragon transformation and finally, the true dragon transformation! Legend has it that as long as the 9 steps of transformation are completed, regardless of the original race, one can transform into a true dragon!"

"It's a shame that one can only reach the water dragon transformation with the Golden Dragon God's technique. I have also made changes to the first 3 transformation technique to make

it more suitable for the body of a carp and this realm as well."

"Given my fixed stats, I would not experience any bottleneck before I reached the true dragon transformation!"

Fang Yuan's gaze was solemn as he continued to feast as the black carp. Regardless of whether it was a fish, worm, snake, or bird, Fang Yuan quickly bit it to its death in one bite and devoured it, transforming it into vital elemental energy.

Of course, he would not stupidly provoke foes that were stronger than him. Even if the fish was one head length shorter than him, he would let the fish go. He was king of those water dwellers within 1 square centimetre in length and he specifically chooses fish or water dwellers that were less than a foot long, using a large quantity of fish or water dwellers as a supplement to his cultivation.

After an unknown period of time, he felt the hot sensation that was in his fish abdomen broke through a certain gate and flowed through his entire body.

A small whirlpool was generated within the water region as the black carp, which was originally 3 feet in length expanded and in an instant, became 6 feet long, which was close to 2 metres.

"2nd transformation!"

Fang Yuan's eyes shone as he looked at his own stats:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: [Black Carp (33 years)]

Essence: 6

Spirit: 6

Magic: 6

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Technique (2nd Transformation)],

[Water Controlling Technique]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Water Controlling Technique?"

The increase in his stats was expected. However, he was shocked when he saw the technique.

He was thinking when a few writings appeared within his sea of knowledge as if it were logic brought about by the heavens and earth.

However, his current abilities were very weak and he could only control the water flow to increase his speed.

"The ability to control water? That is not bad at all!"

If he was an ordinary fish-type spirit, he would only be able to control the water flow.

However, Fang Yuan was not ordinary. After considering for a while, he suddenly leapt out of the water and shot a water arrow from his fish mouth.

"Pff!"

The strength of the water arrow was considerably huge. A white water bird, which was originally resting, was unable to dodge the arrow. It was struck by the water arrow and

fell into the lake.

Fang Yuan immediately pounced on it and devoured it.

"The ability to control water should increase as the spirit's cultivation increases, as of now, I am able to comprehend the minor techniques of increasing speed and forming water arrows, water gun and using water protect myself. In the future, my power will continue to increase..."

Fang Yuan's eyes flashed as he realized the benefits of this dream realm.

"Even though the cultivation here is not transferable to other realms, my comprehension of water-type techniques are valuable...even if I achieved nothing in this dream-traverse, I will be able to condense the water-type sword 5 times faster when I go back. That is more valuable compared to anything else!"

After the 2nd transformation, Fang Yuan's capabilities increased with the Water Controlling Technique.

Now, he dared to strike those fishes that were of his size. After all, those type of fish could be counted as spirits. Their spirit and blood were thick and one of them was equivalent to tens or hundreds of normal fish!

His hunting area had expanded from a small corner to the whole of the Lotus Region as well.

"Water gun!"

Fang Yuan flicked his tail as he fixed his eyes on a big green fish.

The fish might not be as big as he was. However, it was still around 5 feet long with shiny scales. It was also a predator in this region.

He was naturally unafraid as he swam forward and condense a stream of water gun.

This was a water-type move which spiralled and as such, it was most suitable for an underwater attack.

The big green fish was startled at first when it saw the black carp approaching. After overcoming its shock, it swam forward fiercely and was struck by the water gun. In an instant, a large hole appeared on its body as the scales flew in all directions.

Fang Yuan did not wait and instead, rushed forward and severed its nerves in one clean bite, sending the fish to its death. Soon

after, he started to devour the fish.

"Good! There is no doubt that this is spirit grade. This spirit and blood are uncommon and of importance to me!"

Fang Yuan felt that his vital elemental energy was supplemented way beyond what was normal as he ate the meat of the fish. It seemed that the big green fish could be considered a spirit. It was a pity that some of its spiritual knowledge was not yet attained and as such, it was muddleheaded and could only act based on its instinct.

Fang Yuan felt that his vital elemental energy increased quickly with the consumption of food. Unknowingly, his body grew by another foot which was a cause for celebration.

"The first 3 transformations of the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula focus on the storing of the vital elemental energy. I do not experience any bottlenecks and as such, I can quickly achieve my cultivation!"

He quickly devoured the big green fish till only the bones were left. After which, he used his spiritual will to scan the surroundings and discovered that something was amiss.

"Who is there?"

"Ahhh...no...don't eat me!"

A scallop the size of a millstone appeared from below the silt. It seemed as though it wanted to escape by sprouting water.

"Stay!"

Fang Yuan laughed coldly. This level of ability to control water was nowhere near his level of water control. With his manipulation of the water current, he swam to the scallop as if he was looking for an area to strike.

"Ohhh....Please don't eat me, I am not tasty!"

A wave of spiritual will transmitted from within the scallop as a

Yin spirit appeared. It took on a shape of a beautiful young girl.
"My flesh is very smelly, very smelly..."

"Haha.....rest assured, since you have already achieved spiritual awareness and is able to give your divine spirit form, I will not eat you!"

Fang Yuan revealed his Yin spirit which took on the shape of a youth in black clothing as he used his spiritual will to communicate.

In his heart, he felt pleasantly surprised.

The demonic strength of the scallop in front of him was obviously lesser than the big green fish. However, it was able to attain spiritual awareness and even project its Yin spirit, which was hard to achieve.

Compared to the scallop, the green fish was a simple being. Even amongst the demon race, they were not of the same level.

"You really won't eat me?"

It was obvious that the little girl had little experience. She was frightened till she teared.

"I really won't eat you!"

Fang Yuan had to hold back his laughter.

The spiritual energy in this realm was thick. One would be able to project their Yin spirit if they managed to achieve their divine spirit.

The Yin spirits in this realm were very innocent. For example, the little girl in front of him revealed herself without much thought. If he had any ill intentions, he would be able to destroy its soul.

"That's good!"

The little girl patted her chest as the scallop opened and closed its mouth, revealing the snow-white flesh and the pearl within.

"Idiot!"

Fang Yuan's spiritual will moved forward and slapped her forehead. "Don't trust what strangers say so easily. Furthermore, don't anyhow reveal the light of your pearl or it will cause you much trouble!"

"Roger!"

The young girl cradled her head as she cried softly in pain. She looked at the condensed spiritual will which revealed a far superior Fang Yuan. She wanted to cry but no tears came.

"That's enough, how did you project your form?"

Fang Yuan swam at her side and asked randomly.

"I face the moon and absorb the energy every night. After a while, I manage to do this!"

The little girl could feel Fang Yuan's kindness which drew her closer.

"Do you face the moon and absorb the Emperor Flow Serum or the Chilling Night Essence?"

Fang Yuan looked at the innocent girl and adored her in his heart. He touched her forehead. "I show pass you a technique. Next time, you will be able to cultivate faster as you face the moon and cultivate! Also, since you do not have a name, I shall call you Luo Zhu!"

At this point, he touched Luo Zhu's forehead with a finger.

Luo Zhu swooned and attained much knowledge. She smiled sweetly. "Thank you, brother[1]!"

Her brows furrowed as she asked sadly, "Why do you eat so many fishes?"

"That is because I am cultivating!"

Fang Yuan looked into the horizon. "It is just that our dao is

different!"

"Rumble!"

At this moment, above the water surface, a streak of white lightning flashed as the dark storm clouds loomed overhead, bringing with it an immense pressure.

"It's here again!"

Luo Zhu was so frightened her divine spirit immediately hid in the scallop and dared not come out. This was a heavenly tribulation. She was frightened even though it was far off and there was a water body between them.

"Hmmm, recently, there is a lot of lightning in Qi Lake!"

Fang Yuan's divine spirit was unafraid of the thunder. His eyes were solemn as he remembered the voice of the water god. His feeling that time was running out increased.

"It is considered fate if I am still able to visit the beach after I achieve a breakthrough in my cultivation!"

The water god rewarded his allies generously and yet, there were 3 tribulations outside-heaven, earth and people!

Previously, he distributed his wealth in order to gain some karma.

However, the tribulation outside was vast. Could it be overcome easily? This was a good opportunity for the other water dwellers and those who covet his position.

[1] A term of endearment to an older person.

Chapter 258: Transforming Into A Dragon

Ever since he had met Luo Zhu, Fang Yuan started to explore further and began to make friends with a few spirits.

To be labelled as a spirit, they had to have a hardy physical body and had to be spiritually aware.

Fang Yuan would not eat these creatures. Instead, he would befriend them and gather information from them.

He still preferred the big green fish with strong energy but spiritually unaware of what was happening.

After his eating spree, he had grown to as long as 3 metres and as he swam, waves swept above him. He was a bully in the region.

If this place was a small lake or river, he could create chaos and might even be respected as a Water Dragon King.

Of course, there were many powerful creatures in Qi Lake and the little cultivation of his was only average.

"Another one!"

As he swam in the lake, his body glowed black. He would no longer pay attention to smaller fishes.

"My body is surging with elemental force. If I swallow another spirit, I can surely achieve the 3rd Transformation!"

Normal fishes would not be able to train up so quickly.

"Do I really need to attack those spirits? If I do, I'll have to kill them in one bite must hide from others, otherwise, trouble would come looking for me..."

It was alright for Fang Yuan to eat the other normal fishes to cultivate himself. However, it was considered overboard if he were to eat the creatures with spiritual awareness.

Considering his ability now, he still did not have the power to go

against the unspoken rule of not attacking creatures with spiritual awareness.

As he swam and looked out for potential targets, he unknowingly arrived at where Luo Zhu was.

With his spiritual will, he scanned the surroundings and suddenly became enraged. With the flick of his tail, he rushed over.

"You indecent thing, hand the pearl over!"

In front, Luo Zhu refused to open her clam, and there was a soft crying voice of a little girl.

Outside, there was a ferocious sawtooth fish bigger than Fang Yuan's current size. He had a slim body and a swordlike mouth filled with teeth as sharp as a saw. There were spikes on its tail as well and a Yin Spirit the shape of a middle-aged man was above it. "Hand it over! If you do not, I'll break your shell open and destroy you!"

He was extremely quick and as he swam behind Luo Zhu, he aimed before charging at her with full speed.

"Bang!"

After a huge tremor, there was a big hole in her shell and Luo Zhu was wailing loudly.

"How dare you!"

Although it was only normal for the strong to eat the weak, Fang Yuan was Luo Zhu's friend and he had to help her.

Seeing the sawtooth fish attempting to charge at her again, Fang Yuan rushed out and rammed into his stomach, biting it with his sharp teeth.

"Kacha!"

He had cultivated his sharp teeth. For the purpose of biting and digestion, he had strengthened it, and it was as hard as metal.

Immediately, there was an open wound in the sawtooth fish's stomach, as Fang Yuan bit a piece of flesh from him.

"Ah... How dare you!"

As the middle-aged man screamed, his Yin Spirit returned to his body, and the sawtooth fish appeared more ferocious than ever.

"Water spear!"

As his spiritual will shook, two swirling water spears appeared and penetrated through the sawtooth's wound, destroying his insides.

"This is impossible..."

A wave of thought came from the eyes of the sawtooth fish.

Although they were about the same size, the sawtooth fish was a natural predator and would have the advantage over normal fishes like carps.

Never would he have thought that this black carp was a mutated fish!

With a feeling of unjust, the sawtooth fish continued to rush forward instead of retreating and was ready to fight for his life with Fang Yuan.

"Haha, do you think I'll be afraid of you?!"

Fang Yuan knew his strengths and was aware that he was the strongest among all creatures in the local region. He wouldn't be afraid of even the biggest creatures. With the flick of his tail, he smacked the sawtooth fish and followed up with a bite, pulling off flesh with every mouth.

"Brother, please spare me! Spare me!"

After their exchange, the sawtooth fish was at a disadvantage and was under Fang Yuan's total control. There was nothing he could do to release himself and could only reveal himself as a Yin Spirit to beg for his life.

"Hmph, since you intend to harm my friend, I cannot let you go!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed as he rolled his eyes. Finally, he bit onto the head of the sawtooth fish.

"Ah..."

The middle-aged man exclaimed as his spirit attempted to escape.

Although he had lost his physical body and that the Yin Spirit would slowly die with it, he would still have a slight chance of survival if fate allows.

Of course, Fang Yuan would not let him survive. Quickly, he released his Yin Spirit as well and fired a water arrow at him, destroying his Yin Spirit.

"This is god given!"

Looking at the huge sawtooth fish corpse, Fang Yuan quickly gobbled him up in happiness.

He was only halfway done but he could feel a warm surge of energy breaking through something in his body.

On his stats window, the figures changed:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: [Black Carp (66 Years)]

Essence: 12

Spirit: 12

Magic: 12

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula (3rd Transformation)], [Water Controlling Technique (Grade 2)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Indeed, I'm at the 3rd Transformation! Could the 66 Years refer

to my cultivation level? That my abilities are comparable to a water spirit that has cultivated for 66 years?"

Fang Yuan was deep in his thoughts as he looked at his stats window.

"Brother!"

As the clam opened, Luo Zuo invited Fang Yuan over.

"Didn't I tell you not to let anyone see that pearl of yours? Look at what happened!"

Fang Yuan was in a good mood as he stroked the little girl's forehead.

"I've learnt!"

Luo Zhu tugged at Fang Yuan's sleeves as she examined him with curiosity. "Eh? Brother, when did you change your appearance? You have a beard as well!"

"This is a transformation. With enough spiritual energy, I would be able to start the next stage of condensing!"

Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit examined his own body as well.

His body was originally larger but now, it had become shortened. This was due to the fact that the energy in his body had been purified.

Even so, his glittering scales and longer whiskers made him look more experienced and powerful. More importantly, his water-type skills had improved.

"In the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula, the first three transformations would be to form the basics. It would be difficult to achieve a breakthrough to the 4th Transformation!"

Looking at his black carp body, he was lost in his thoughts.

In the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula, there was a difficulty in the 4th Transformation. It was called 'Carp Leaping

'Over the Dragon's Gate'.

This would involve his physical body changing, which was a huge thing.

After all, with the body of a carp, he could at most be a demon in a river. Only by leaping over the Dragon's Gate and gaining the properties of a dragon could there be a future for him.

"To think about it, I was fortunate enough to possess this black carp, since it is related to dragons. That way, I would have the affinity to become a dragon! If I were to possess a crab or shrimp, I would really cry."

"Kacha!"

At this moment, there was the sound of an explosion on the surface of the river. Purple lightning struck down like pillars of heaven.

This was a different threat from before, and Fang Yuan was stunned.

"This is..."

Without caring about Luo Zhu, Fang Yuan quickly floated to the surface of the lake.

As he arrived on top, he witnessed dark clouds covering the sun and moon. Lightning flashed down towards the centre of the lake.

'This is the power of the heavens!'

No matter how many times he had seen this before, it would strike fear into him every single time.

"The Water God is finally going to experience the tribulation!"

As a wave of water spread across the surface of the lake, many spirits floated up as well and were all shocked as they witnessed the lightning.

No matter how many creatures there were, all of them could only

hide like Fang Yuan. There were only a few who were able to release their Yin Spirit, and even Luo Zhu could not do it.

There was an old creature with a white beard sighing.

Beside him, there was a well-built man with a black face and brute spiritual aura.

"Brother Gui, Brother Zhu!"

Fang Yuan greeted them.

Both of them quickly returned a greeting. "Congratulations, Brother Fang, on your improvements in cultivation!"

Fang Yuan knew the both of them. They were the spirits nearby. Before he had made the breakthrough, he had even thought about eating them.

The white-bearded creature was Gui Zhong, a green-haired tortoise. He was the oldest among all of them and was around a thousand years old. Brother Zhu, on the other hand, was a crocodile and was similar to Fang Yuan in a sense where he also trained up by eating other animals.

At this point in time, as the three of them looked at the lightning crackle down, they appeared extremely solemn.

"Water God's tribulation?"

Fang Yuan acted as though he was confused. "Please explain."

"Ah..."

Gui Zhong sighed. "The Water God of Qi Lake was originally a green python. Although he had the properties of a dragon and had once ruled over an area, he was ultimately not a dragon!"

"After a hundred years, a snake would transform into a python, and after another five hundred years, the python would finally transform into a dragon... Ah, the Water God has painstakingly trained for five hundred years and has good karma. However, to become a dragon, it still has to undergo a lightning tribulation! Not

just that, he will have to undergo a human tribulation as well, and I'm not sure if the Water God will be able to make it through..."

Fang Yuan remained silent.

The few hundred mile radii of the Qi Lake and the presence of the Water God would surely attract a lot of attention from everywhere.

"Previously, the Water God had made use of his good karma to delay his tribulation. Who knows if he had cleared his human tribulation as well... He can no longer delay it and with the lightning, he had to face it squarely..."

As soon as Gui Zhong finished his sentence, a purple streak of lightning crackled across the sky, engulfing the entire sky in a white glow like a pillar from the heavens.

In the middle of the lightning, there was a black shadow roaring.

"Roar!"

Suddenly, there was a powerful dragon's roar.

All the spiritual energy in the vicinity of Qi Lake quickly gathered around the black shadow.

"Good!"

Witnessing this, Gui Zhong was jubilant. "With his good karma and the help from the spiritual energy around the lake, he is likely to make it!"

Just as he ended, a few streaks of black smoke rushed towards the Water God with much hostility.

It was evident that some of the black streaks of smoke were from the powerful demons in Qi Lake as they rushed up to disrupt the transference of spiritual energy to the Water God.

"Rumble!"

As the final lightning struck down, the silhouette of a dragon was struck and a pitiful dragon's roar was heard in the minds of every

creature living in the lake.

"Water God..."

Gui Zhong was stunned. Seeing a water dragon falling down and breaking into two parts as black smoke surrounded it, he was speechless.

"Hehe... hehe..."

At the side, the crocodile gave a snicker with a hint of worry. After all, he also had properties of a dragon and he could end up like the Water God!

Chapter 259: Good and Bad Fortune

"Splatter!"

After the lightning tribulation, as the clouds disappeared, large raindrops began to pelt on the surface of the lake.

A red streak of light shot up into the sky, illuminating the entire lake.

It gave off a tempting vibe as the creatures around the lotus flowers were beginning to get attracted to it, especially the crocodile.

"Ah... It seems that the Water God has passed on. This is the dragon's blood spilling into the lake!"

Even though the Water God of Qi Lake had not become a real dragon, it already had its blood. Although it was still far from being a dragon, his destruction meant that it would be extremely hard for anyone to attempt to transform into a dragon.

"Whoosh!"

It was as though a gunshot went off as fishes swam frantically to the centre of the lake.

"This object... Please don't snatch it from me, the two of you!"

The crocodile snarled and disappeared into the water in a glow of light.

The crocodile appeared once more, but this time covered in a thick scaly armour as it made its way clumsily into the centre of the lake.

"Brother Gui, why are you not after it?"

Fang Yuan looked at Gui Zhong and smiled.

"The competition is intense and there are a few powerful demons among them. I am but a bag of bones, what can I do?"

Furthermore... I am too slow... Why are you not trying, brother?"

Gui Zhong replied as he glanced at Fang Yuan with curiosity.

"The current is too strong there, and I'm afraid I would be lost!"

Fang Yuan smiled.

In reality, both the carp and the tortoise were related to dragons and would naturally have the properties of the dragon. Therefore, they did not have to obtain it from external sources.

Therefore, he could swim around calmly with Gui Zhong.

Fang Yuan initially had the thought of reaping the rewards from the Water God, but after seeing the tribulation and the intense competition among the demons, he gave up on the thought.

Based on his current cultivation, it would be suicide if he were to try to snatch the dragon's essence in the middle of the lake.

The crocodile, although spiritually aware, was attracted to the centre by his instincts. It was unknown if its instinct was a good thing or a bad thing.

"If there's nothing else, I'll carry on with my cultivation!"

After finishing his piece, Fang Yuan returned his Yin Spirit into his body and flicked his tail. Bidding goodbye to Luo Zhu, he promptly disappeared into the depths.

Gui Zhong remained speechless. "He is humble and composed, and can even resist against such a strong temptation. This black fish is mysterious..."

Looking at the centre of the lake, he snickered. "Dragon's blood? Hehe... Do they really think that the Water God's blood is dragon's blood? How could one possibly obtain dragon properties so easily?"

Beneath him, a huge shadow appeared. It was a huge green-haired tortoise with streaks of gold on its shell.

"With the death of the Water God, the Qi Lake will return to its

usual chaos. Why should I get involved in all these? I'll take a rest! And we'll see what to do after a hundred-year-long dream..."

With a flash, his Yin Spirit returned to his body and disappeared.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

Bubbles were released as the green tortoise started to sink downwards like a heavy rock.

...

"How could they think that it would be so easy to get dragon properties?"

After calming Luo Zhu down, Fang Yuan swam away as his Yin Spirit chuckled.

Although there was a chance for his carp body to activate its dragon properties, the chances were extremely low. If he were to obtain real dragon's blood, he would be able to transform entirely and his future would be limitless.

"However, a normal water dragon's blood would be poisonous. It would be extremely difficult to try and get the drop of real dragon's blood amidst all the competition!"

As he swam gracefully, he swallowed another small fish. "I shall watch the show from afar..."

In the blink of an eye, 7 days had passed.

Indeed, the crocodile did not return. A few mutated fish returned instead. Although they did not get the dragon properties, they were still fortunate enough not to be poisoned by the water dragon's blood. All of them were fat looking and filled with elemental force.

Seeing this, Fang Yuan was jubilant. He had decided that from that day onwards, he would target these mutated fish.

"Whoosh!"

Underwater, two streams of water swirled into water spears which pierced through a white fish.

This white fish was a few feet long and was much larger than Fang Yuan. More importantly, the scale on it was golden, which made it unusual.

Fang Yuan had relied on his strong stats and Water Controlling Technique to kill the other fish.

"Although these fish did not get the water dragon's true blood to gain their dragon properties, they had taken in the water dragon's spiritual aura and benefitted from it... By slowly eating them, I will slowly consume the water dragon's spiritual aura and increase the possibility of me leaping through the Dragon's Gate..."

He looked at his own body.

He was originally 8 inches but now, he was only 3 inches long. His scales were glittering with a dull gold hue, and his whiskers were long. Every inch of his body was perfection.

"Am I finally at this stage?"

Fang Yuan felt that he was at his limits, and took a quick look at his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: [Black Carp (99 Years)]

Essence: 17

Spirit: 17

Magic: 17

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Technique (3rd Transformation)], [Water Controlling Technique (Grade 2)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

...

"No matter how concentrated the spiritual energy is in this realm, the limit for carps is 100 years. I am already at this stage... I either go all out and leap through the Dragon's Gate, or I become nothing!"

"Of course, what are the things I can take from this realm that would benefit me? Or should I say, what can I take from this realm..."

Fang Yuan had already tested the theory out. The rules which govern this realm was much stricter than the rules of reality in Hui Realm.

The connection between him and his actualised dream world was limited and it was arduous for him to even harness the sword's essence. It was even more difficult for him to transfer anything into the actualised dream world.

"Dragon's pearl, dragon's properties... Or the natural spiritual meridians... and the position of Water God. Everything is a mystery..."

After giving it much thought, these were the few things which he could attempt to transfer to his actualised dream world. However, as he had learnt before, he still needed to restore his abilities.

Without abilities, he could not even defend himself!

As he was thinking to himself, there was a sudden stream of current ahead as many creatures started to rush towards the lotus flowers.

"Brother, save me!"

The one in front was Zhu Tong, the crocodile. His body was covered in wounds as he dyed the water red.

Seeing Fang Yuan, his eyes widened as he quickly rushed towards him.

"You deserve to die!"

Fang Yuan's spiritual will was enraged. "Zhu Tong! How dare you bring trouble to me!"

"Water spears!"

Within seconds, 6 to 7 water spears were fired at the crocodile.

With the strength of his spiritual will and his Water Controlling Technique, the water spears he had fired were comparable to arrows or even cannons from ships!

"Pu! Pu!"

Even the scales of the crocodile could not deflect the water spears. As the water spears pierced through, blood exploded from him.

Zhu Tong's Yin Spirit appeared and smiled. "Who would've thought that... I would die at the hands of my own brother..."

Since his physical body had died, his soul would not be able to sustain for long. The figure of the well-built man slowly disappeared. In a sigh, a golden glow shot out of the crocodile and landed on Fang Yuan's head.

"This is..."

With his spiritual will on guard, Fang Yuan could control the glow if it were to harm him.

However, after examination, he realised that it was a map.

"That ... black fish, hand over the map of Water God's secret mansion, or I'll eat you up!"

As fishes behind gave chase, the water guardian standing on clams appeared once again, looking ferocious. It was the same one which Fang Yuan had seen before.

"Water God's secret mansion?"

Fang Yuan remained speechless as he looked at the crocodile

corpse.

It seems that the crocodile was rather lucky to have obtained the map. However, he was no longer alive to enjoy the reward.

Of course, by passing on the treasure map to Fang Yuan, he wanted to bring trouble to Fang Yuan!

Seeing the face of the water guardian, Fang Yuan knew that even if he were to hand it over, he would still be killed.

After all, anyone who encountered the treasure map would remember it in their spiritual wills.

"Go!"

With the pressure from the water guardian and the assistance he had from the other water spirits, Fang Yuan was pressurized to make a decision.

Seeing this, he quickly flicked his tail and swam away.

"Hey! Where are you going!"

These water spirits were naive. Only after Fang Yuan had swum for a distance did they realise what was happening. They were fuming mad. "Stay!"

Blue streaks of light were shot towards Fang Yuan and spread out underwater.

There was a golden glitter on Fang Yuan's body. With the flick of his tail, numerous water spears exploded behind him as he quickly made his escape.

He could no longer stay in the region of the lotus flowers.

"This black carp..."

The water guardian was stunned. After a while, there was a glitter in his eyes. "This fish does not seem normal. Catch it!"

"Also, investigate its background. How can our elder demon's treasure lie in the hands of others? I want him to be trapped in the

Qi Lake!"

...

"What luck! I didn't ask for trouble, but trouble came looking for me!"

He did not do anything to deserve the trouble. As he swam away, he felt a little depressed.

He was already at the 3rd transformation of the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation and had restored half of his stats. Under chase, he was obviously quicker than the normal fishes and spiritual fishes.

After all, even the water guardian might be no match for him.

"This will not end here..."

Fang Yuan had a premonition that everything was not over.

He would surely be tracked down and chased after. After all, that was the outcome for the crocodile, and he was no different.

"I need to leave this place!"

He had made up his mind. "Furthermore... Since they are so anxious about the treasure map, let me take a look at it. I might even be lucky and surprised!"

The heavens did not give it to him, but it ended up with him ultimately!

Although the crocodile wanted to harm Fang Yuan by giving him the map, he was strong enough to escape and make use of it, turning it into his fortune.

Good things can turn bad, and bad things can become good!

Chapter 260: Secret Mansions

Beneath Qi Lake, there was a water palace. It was where the Water God once stayed and was filled with spiritual energy. It was glittering gold from the inside, and there was a huge protective array on the outside.

In the main hall, pearls and jade pieces covered the floor, reflecting the image of many clams and shellfish dancing about.

On the tables, there were spiritual fruits and spiritual wine; a dinner was ongoing.

But this time, the owner of the place was no longer the Water God of Qi Lake.

"Brother Bai! Please!"

The three demons were the stars of the night. One of them who was covered in a flowery pattern offered wine to a young man in white. "Wishing you a speedy cultivation to become the next Water God!"

Brother Bai was Bai Guan, a python. The other two were a water buffalo and an alligator snapping turtle, but both of them were suitable and had dragon properties as well.

They had already decided since the attack on Water God. Bai Guan did the most and would receive the imperial order and the water palace. The remaining corpse and dragon properties from the Water God would be divided equally among the other two.

"Thank you for your blessings!"

Bai Guan smiled. Inside him, the imperial order, in the form of a talisman, floated mysteriously. "The previous Water God is of the same race as me. If not for the fact that my tribulation is about to arrive and I require the imperial order, I wouldn't have attacked him..."

"We still need to clean up what he did while he was alive!"

The alligator snapping turtle revealed his Yin Spirit, a well-built man. The man started to gobble down an entire pig and cow before gulping down bowls of wine. After a satisfactory burp, he continued. "The previous god trusts no one and therefore there might be a trap or two in this palace!"

"I know..."

Bai Guan continued. "With the imperial order from the Water God, I can detect that the few generations before him have put in place several secret mansions. I'm guessing that they are preparing to have a comeback!"

"Comeback?"

The buffalo shrieked. "We cannot let that happen!"

If they did not combine forces, none of them was strong enough on their own to take down the Water God.

"Your objection is useless. These are the rules of this world. If you have heavenly karma, you can have a chance of a comeback!"

Bai Guan stroked the beard above his mouth. "Of course, I will still have to depend on fate to see if I can cultivate and transform into a dragon. Furthermore, I already have the position of Water God and there's nothing else I can do."

With the appointment of the Water God, he had access to a 500-mile radius area of spiritual energy around the lake.

This was assistance from the heavens and earth on a single person. If the Water God were to revive, he could be equally powerful without the imperial order and would regain his power after his reincarnation.

"Even so, we still have to get rid of the trouble!"

The few demons exchanged glances with a murderous look.

"Water God, the water guardian Ha Haer is requesting to see

you!"

After the dinner, a water guardian entered and knelt down respectfully. He was the one who chased after the crocodile.

"What's the matter?"

Strictly speaking, Bai Guan had yet to reach the cultivation level to be the Water God, but his actions were already demonstrating his power.

Ha Haer started to describe everything from chasing the crocodile to the encounter with Fang Yuan.

"A black carp? You let him snatch the treasure map and escape?"

Bai Guan frowned. "You useless thing!"

"Water God, spare me! Spare me!"

Ha Haer started to kowtow.

"From the chaos, the crocodile had obtained a map of the secret mansion. Although it is not the map of the most important one, we still need to be wary!"

After lecturing, Bai Guan appeared solemn. "After receiving the imperial order and undergoing cultivation, I already have half of what it takes to be the Water God. Although I cannot exactly pinpoint the locations of the secret mansions, I can roughly detect them! The scattered secret mansions are all small issues. Most importantly, we need to destroy the one within the dragon palace!"

The white python was extremely decisive and quickly made a decision.

...

At the same time, Fang Yuan followed the directions on the map and arrived in a new area.

Qi Lake was extremely large and this area was a secluded one. More importantly, there was little spiritual energy around here

and schools of fishes would not come here.

Furthermore, the current was strong and it was a dangerous place.

"This should be the place on the map!"

After swimming past a coral tree and through a few underwater currents, he arrived at a trench in the lake.

"The Water God's secret mansion? What can I find inside?"

The trench was deep but Fang Yuan was unafraid and dived right down.

Beneath, it was pitch black and Fang Yuan started to feel fear of the unknown.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

After a while, bubbles emerged from the side and lantern-like eyes appeared.

"Hmmm?"

As Fang Yuan dodged, he released his spiritual will and realised that his attacker was an eel.

"Water-type shield!"

As his spiritual will shook, a translucent shield covered him with a current of water.

"Peng! Peng!"

As soon as the shield was formed, there came a continuous fierce knocking.

Ferocious glares from many eyes appeared, surrounding Fang Yuan like a pack of wolves.

"Is this... an eel's nest?"

With a bitter smile, Fang Yuan released water arrows in all directions.

"Whizz!"

The water arrows pierced through many eels, sinking many. The others started to escape in fear.

"Heh... I just have to kill one to scare the rest away!"

With the flick of his tail, he released his spiritual will once more and followed the directions on the map, eventually arriving at a water cave.

"This is the place..."

Clenching his teeth, he dived in.

"Buzz!"

In the next moment, there was a flash and the surroundings started to change.

As soon as he entered the hole, he could see what was truly inside.

What had appeared in front of Fang Yuan was a huge array formed from a fog. It continuously consumed spiritual energy from the water around and remained active.

"Is this an array?"

There was a look of interest in his eyes.

The array was only average but it was already considered strong to the lake dwellers. However, to Fang Yuan who has knowledge about arrays, it was nothing.

"Destroy the array!"

With the flick of his tail, he started to work on it.

...

Beneath the Water God's palace.

Bai Guan, the water buffalo and the alligator snapping turtle stood before an array and took in a cold breath.

"Impressive! Impressive indeed!"

The water buffalo stared at the array. "Who would've thought that that green python would be so well-versed in arrays."

"This place is considered the heart of the palace. Without it, I can only activate the buildings outside. I'm afraid my abilities are still limited, even with the imperial order..."

Bai Guan let out a sigh and looked at the 12 tall pillars in front of him and the fog surrounding it. "This is a powerful restriction. I'm afraid we will have to slowly undergo cultivation to break through it in the future."

These three demons were totally clueless about arrays and could only think about breaking through it using brute force.

Within seconds, three streaks of black fog appeared and shot up into the sky.

...

"This restriction looks simple on the outside but is complicated on the inside!"

On the head of the black fish, Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit appeared. He was examining the colourful restriction in front of him.

After breaking through the fog array outside, he arrived here. He could see the vague silhouette of jade treasures beyond the restriction.

"Water God is indeed a God. A random secret mansion is already so luxurious! What about the palace?"

Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit shimmered as he entered the restriction.

"Whooo!"

The colourful restriction started to spin from a green, to red, then to black.

"Fortunately, this is only a variation of the Five Elements Array!"

After investigating it, there was a look of joy on his face.

Fang Yuan already had the elementary knowledge of arrays. In an attempt to form the 8 Gates Sword Array, he placed more emphasis on learning about arrays. Although he was still not an expert in it, he could still easily break through a simple restriction like this.

"Restriction, transfer?"

After mulling over it, Fang Yuan sighed. "Is this restriction linked to another array elsewhere? That after breaking it, it would affect something elsewhere? Fortunately, after transferring, I can reverse the changes!"

Looking at the imagery of a palace appearing and disappearing, his expression changed.

"Kacha! Kacha!"

At this moment, on the restriction, there was a distinct sound, and Fang Yuan's expression changed once more. "This is not good! Is the other restriction from elsewhere activated as well?"

Without hesitation, he slammed his fish body forward.

"Rumble!"

In the next moment, something happened!

After coming to his senses, Fang yuan found himself in an enormous palace carved in white jade. There was a flowery array beneath him.

Not just that, outside him, there was a commotion and three thick streaks of black fogs started to rise upwards.

"Is that... the Demon King!?"

Fang Yuan stared.

At the same time, outside, Bai Guan and the other two demons stared at the black carp which appeared in the palace.

They had painstakingly made their way through the array and were left with the final steps. Who would've known that a black carp would appear?

"D*mn it!"

Fang Yuan shivered in fear. "It seems that in all the secret mansions of the Water God, there would be the same array linking everywhere together, and even linking the secret mansion which the demons are after?"

As he clenched his teeth, he glanced at the array before rushing towards the main hall.

"I am the Water God. What are your intentions, black carp?"

Seeing this, Bai Guan was enraged. Frenzied, the other two demons joined him in rushing into the array. "Succumb to me and I will let you become the general to lead all the water troops. You will only be under me but above everybody else!! A gentleman like me never lie!"

"Get lost!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes as he swam into the main hall.

"Rumble!"

As soon as he entered, there was a shocking surge of energy.

In the golden-plated stairs, there was a corpse of a green dragon.

"This... this is a real dragon!"

Its scales were green with a hint of gold. It had two antlers and four claws and was majestic looking. In a moment, Fang Yuan could already recognise it. Quickly, he noticed a golden pearl glittering on the dragon's head, and knew that the energy he felt was from the pearl.

"Dragon Pearl!"

He swam across and bit it in his mouth.

"Whoosh!"

The process of taking the pearl was shockingly smooth. Following, the corpse of the dragon disintegrated into ash.

Chapter 261: Breakthrough

"Is this... what's left behind of a dead dragon? A Dragon Pearl?"

After obtaining the Dragon Pearl, the green dragon, and even the palace started to disintegrate.

Outside, as the three demons witnessed the scene unfolding, their eyeballs were bulging.

"Little black fish, you won't be able to handle it! Give it to me!"

"I'm not stupid!"

As he looked at the other treasures around, he felt a sense of pity. Regardless, he rushed to the centre of the palace where he had come from through the array.

"Oh no, does this black fish understand how to manipulate arrays?"

As Bai Guan exclaimed, a huge white python emerged from behind, hissing loudly.

"Crumble!"

Finally, the array could not hold on any longer as it shattered.

"Don't think of leaving!"

The three demons started to chase after Fang Yuan.

"I'm sorry, but it's too late!"

With a smile, he disappeared among the glow.

"Rumble!"

In the next moment, an astonishing surge of energy swept across the entire palace, turning everything into rubble.

"Ahh! That d*rned black fish!"

Bai Guan shrieked. "Don't let me catch you, otherwise I will make you regret being born!!!"

Behind him, the water buffalo and alligator snapping turtle looked at each other.

Being the more powerful demons of Qi Lake, it was a disgrace for them to be outsmarted by a small fish.

Needless to say, it was a huge loss.

Everywhere was glittering.

...

In the secret mansion within the trench.

Fang Yuan fired a water arrow and destroyed the restriction, heaving a sigh of relief. "Phew!"

If he were a little late, he would be captured by the three demons and had to give up on this world.

Only until now he could finally examine the Dragon Pearl in peace.

The golden pearl was only as big as a thumb. There was a mild golden glow coming from within and it gave off the vibe of a dragon.

If not for the fact that Fang Yuan was from another world and had strong magical energy, he might not even be able to take it away.

"In this Dragon Pearl, it contains dragon element. In other words, the essence of a dragon. Because all of the element is within the pearl, the pearl is extremely strong. If I were to swallow it, I'm afraid I won't be able to digest it..."

As he looked at the pearl, he still swallowed it without holding back.

"Whatever, I'll just take it as though I'm swallowing a rock. After all, I don't have pockets to store things, right?"

There was a benefit for swallowing the pearl. The vibe of the

dragon was now isolated in his stomach and could no longer be tracked. If there was a need to, Fang Yuan could also release it to scare other predators.

Fang Yuan felt satisfied. "I'm afraid I'll have to wait till I'm at least at the 6th Transformation before I can digest it. However, it should still be able to activate the dragon properties I have in me, right?"

Clumsily, he swam out of the trench, aimed at a certain direction and swam quickly.

He had to swim quickly!

He now had the treasure map and even the pearl! Since he had taken the pearl in front of the three demons, they would surely hunt him down.

Could the entire Qi Lake be hunting for a black carp now?

"I cannot stay in Qi Lake anymore. The only way is to run..."

Qi Lake stretched across 500 miles, but it was not a standalone lake. On the contrary, it was connected to a lot of other rivers and streams.

Without hesitation, Fang Yuan chose the closest An River and swam towards it.

No matter how powerful the Water God might be, he could only exert his power within Qi Lake. If Fang Yuan were to escape the lake, the three demons could do nothing.

"It's a pity that I'll have to leave the Lotus Flowers!"

As thoughts ran through his mind, he continued to rush along his way.

At the size of 3 feet and 3 inches, there were many other black carps like him. Many carps were caught just because they looked like him.

"I'm about to reach there!"

As soon as Fang Yuan realised that a search was going on in Qi Lake, he paid more attention to concealing himself. As he looked in a certain direction, there was a look of joy on his face.

He was not far from the river mouth of An River.

Underwater, Fang Yuan could feel a current of water, bringing with it sand and nutrients from an unknown water source.

As soon as he reaches An River, he could go to other lakes and from then on would be a free fish.

With the flick of his tail, he increased his speed.

He knew that the longer he took, the higher the chances of him being caught by the three demons. Based on his current level of cultivation, he might not even be able to escape from them once spotted.

"Whooo!"

Underwater, the strong current was like a thousand hands as it pushed Fang Yuan outwards.

The good thing was that he was strong enough to swim against it. Against the current, Fang Yuan continued to swim towards An River.

"The crucial thing about a carp leaping through the Dragon's Gate is the part about leaping! I will need energy and courage!"

Suddenly, Fang Yuan realised something.

At that moment, it was as though he was right beneath the Dragon's Gate, ready to leap!

"Haha... You cannot run!"

At this moment, a glow appeared.

"Destroy!"

With the flick of a tail, Fang Yuan saw the water guardian in front of him.

He opened his mouth wide and gave a joyful expression. "The God has ordered us to guard the exits. Who would know that you would fall for it! Haha... It is only fair that you end up in my hands. Let's see how I'm going to deal with you!"

The water guardian had a high level of cultivation. As he swung his spear, a wave appeared on the surface of the lake.

"This time... you cannot run!"

Looking at the black carp, he was overjoyed. He stretched his hand over.

"Water arrow!"

"Water spear!"

Fang Yuan executed his techniques in quick succession. However, their cultivation levels were too different and the water guardian was cunning as well. He wore a spiritual armour and therefore, Fang Yuan's attacks were not effective.

Ha Haer grabbed the water in front of him. At that moment, Fang Yuan could feel as though the water had stopped, trapping him in something like a cage.

"We need to end this quick. Otherwise, if the other water guardians or demons arrive, I would be in real trouble..."

"Destroy!"

With the flick of his tail, an enormous force exploded, destroying the water cage. Free, he continued to rush towards An River.

"Eh? You're quite good!"

Ha Haer revealed his true form, a toad. As he opened his mouth, he aimed it at Fang Yuan.

"Whooo!"

The water underneath started to swirl on Fang Yuan as the water was sucked into Ha Haer's mouth. Fang Yuan felt an immense

pressure.

"Hmph, you could have survived, but you chose death... Kill!"

A murderous look flashed across Fang Yuan's eyes. Suddenly, he stopped resisting and rushed straight towards Ha Haer's mouth.

Seeing this, Ha Haer did not close his mouth. Instead, he started to swallow in more water.

"Now!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he opened his mouth as well.

"Roar! Roar!"

In the next moment, a loud roar was heard.

The roar sounded ancient and powerful, as though people would fear it just by hearing it.

As soon as the roar was heard, there was the vibe of a dragon in the vicinity.

It was as though time had stopped.

Ha Haer was a water dweller. Against the vibe of a dragon, he could not resist as he stumbled onto the ground.

"Die!"

Swimming towards him, Fang Yuan fired multiple arrows at Ha Haer's weak points.

"Pu!"

As soon as a water arrow dissipated, another one would be coming at him. Because it was continuous, it appeared like a white streak.

"You..."

There was blood at the throat of Ha Haer. With a face of unwillingness, he fell to the ground, crushing a seashell in his hands.

"Rumble!"

In the next moment, there was a black flash and the vibe of anger all aiming at Fang Yuan.

"Pu!"

His body was flung out, and some of his scales dropped.

"A one-time use talisman?"

Looking at the breathless Ha Haer and the powdery substance on his hands, he looked away and continued rushing towards An River.

"Pu!"

A 3 feet fish leapt out of the surface of the water and over the obstacle which Ha Haer had built, landing into a foreign river.

"Phew..."

Although his body appeared hammered, Fang Yuan heaved a sigh of relief as soon as he entered the waters of An River.

The thought of being chased and killed soon disappeared in his mind as he came to terms with the fact that he had escaped out of Qi Lake.

However, he had a price to pay..."

"Is that strike from the demon king?"

Looking at his own body, he was stunned.

The feeling of power, much stronger than he was, was felt as the water guardian attacked him.

"This is not alright. If it goes on, I think I will die..."

Fang Yuan was expressionless. Suddenly, he felt his stats window shaking.

On the original Black Carp (99 Years), he became blurred and turned into (100 Years)!

"The time of breakthrough has arrived, what a time..."

For fishes, it would be extremely strenuous for them to heal their injuries or leap over the Dragon's Gate.

Needless to say, Fang Yuan was now severely injured and had consumed more than half of his elemental energy. This made it untimely for a breakthrough.

"To heal and breakthrough at the same time? I have it... the Dragon Stinging Technique!"

The good thing was that Fang Yuan was not the average fish. He had learnt a specific technique for use in such a situation from the Golden Dragon God's study.

"I need to heal my injury, and I need to achieve my breakthrough as well... Since I cannot provide elemental energy now, I can retrieve energy from my body!"

Fang Yuan executed the technique in silence.

A miracle happened.

The black carp was originally 3 feet long, but now, it was shrinking and finally, it became 1 feet long.

Of course, the injury also reduced in size and disappeared.

"The Dragon Stinging Technique would allow me to shrink in size, heal my injury and gather my elemental energy. Of course, there are side effects as well... In the following few days, I would be at my weakest and therefore, I would remain the size I once was like the other black carps..."

Chapter 262: Marketplace

It was extremely dangerous for a carp to leap through the Dragon's Gate even though it was not related to transforming into a dragon.

It was especially dangerous for Fang Yuan as he was already seriously injured. Hence, Fang Yuan had no choice but to use the Dragon Stinging Technique to preserve his life after breaking through.

It was called the Dragon Stinging Technique as it granted the user a second chance at life. It preserved the life force and energy of the user, and in an instant, it used up all his elemental energy, turning him into a foot long black carp.

On the upside, all his injuries were reduced by more than half.

"Because I am too heavily injured this time, I will need to maintain the Dragon Stinging Technique for quite a long period of time. Once it finally ends, I can smoothly breakthrough to the 4th transformation..."

He appeared greyish, as if his stats window got sealed up, and murmured to himself under his gills.

Any other demon would likely be dead if they experienced this right after breaking through. Even if they were lucky enough to escape death, they would be left in a state where they would lose all hope, went crazy, or transformed into all sorts of different creatures.

It was thanks to his vast knowledge and his high stats that he managed to survive the ordeal and keep his sanity.

"Even though I managed to tide through this dangerous ordeal.... This prolonged state of weakness would be the death of me!"

When Fang Yuan saw a crocodile swim past, he flicked his tail and quickly swam away from it.

If this was before he was weakened, the crocodile would have been eaten up by him, but he really could not afford to fight it now.

It would have been all for naught if he survived taunting the Water God, killed Ha Haer, jumped through the dragon gates, only to be killed by a normal crocodile.

The current of An River was very fast and was vastly different from the calm lake of QI. Luckily Fang Yuan managed to adapt quickly.

Additionally, there were certain advantages to maintaining the Dragon Stinging Technique.

The water god filed an arrest warrant for a 3-foot black carp that had enormous strength and possessed the abilities to manipulate water. This was completely different from his current state. The Dragon Stinging Technique would allow him to be unnoticed by even the powerful demons, there would be no threat to his identity being revealed.

"Mmm, I should use this chance to gain my footing in the An River. After that, I can follow the river to its source and seek out the Golden Court Lake!"

Fang Yuan was prepared to stay on the run.

At least he knew how the Golden Court Lake was connected to the An River. When comparing size, the Golden Court Lake was much bigger than the Qi Lake, it could be considered as an inland ocean!

Of course, it was a vast distance away, it was as if he was travelling from the northern lands to the southern skies!

"I should take a few days to recover before going on my way again."

Fang Yuan looked at his surroundings, he immediately flicked his tailed and hid in a bush of seaweed.

.....

Half a month later.

"The effects of the Dragon Stinger Technique will be wearing off soon. I should take advantage of my current state and be on my way!"

There were of hidden dangers all around him. In addition, there were constant patrols by the water spirits. Fang Yuan had heard that the Qi Lake Water God had issued an arrest warrant for a 3-foot black carp and sought help from the demon of An River. He felt uneasy and decided to leave his current hiding spot for somewhere even further.

Based on his current appearance and his abilities to conceal his spiritual aura, he would not raise any suspicion even if he was swept by a spiritual will.

"Just keep swimming, just keep swimming.... F*CK, the swimming speed of a normal carp is just too slow!!!"

Fang Yuan was absolutely exhausted when he finally reached the main tributary of the An River. It was a huge plane of slow-moving water.

"Mmm, there is someone."

The river was very broad. There was bait being thrown into the river from both shores, it was apparent that someone was fishing.

"Could it be..... Have I finally met the humans of this world? I almost thought this world was only dominated by spirits and demons!"

Fang Yuan felt really playful, he weaved between the fish hooks and would sometimes stop to eat the fish bait before playfully tugging on the fish hooks.

"Mmm, I am full now, I should continue on my journey."

He burped and was prepared to leave. All of a sudden, he was

startled.

A 10 foot long carp was in the middle of foraging for food when he saw Fang Yuan and charged towards Fang Yuan.

"If this was before, I would have killed you with a single water arrow!"

Fang Yuan cried out, before escaping.

In his weakened state, he was merely a normal black carp, with average swimming speed. He was almost caught a few times by the carp, before finally taking cover in the seaweeds.

He was met by dangers after dangers. He saw a hidden current up ahead and was very happy "F*ck you!"

He focused and shot across the hidden current as soon as he saw a break in its flow. The carp who was following right behind him was caught in the current and swept to god knows where.

"An idiot like you wanted to eat me?! Go eat yourself ass*ole!"

Whilst in the middle of his celebration, a huge net was cast in his direction.

"Mmm?"

Before Fang Yuan could react, he was caught in the net and pulled out of the water.

Hua la!!

Only him, some seaweed, some crustacean were left in the net after the water was drained.

"Is this a fishing boat?"

Fang Yuan heart sank "I celebrated too soon"

"Ahh... such a bad haul again!"

A well-built fisherman pulled the net onto the deck, threw the seaweed away, and picked up Fang Yuan "This carp is all we have, we can either sell it or cook some fish stew...."

Fang Yuan was not unlike any other ordinary fish, he flopped for a while, before foaming at the mouth. There was really nothing he could do.

After all, not only was he a third of his original size, he was literally a fish out of the water. It was likened to a dragon trashing in the shallows or a tiger in the open savanna.

Hua La!

He was thrown into a basket of fishes. The fisherman hauled a few more nets and threw all the bigger fishes into the basket with him. They were transferred into a water-filled basin.

"Hmm... It looks like fishes in this basin are for sale, he would not kill us for now. What luck?"

Fang Yuan was deep in thought "I am going to get eaten either way, be it roasted or steamed, such a depressing situation to be in...."

He looked at the other fishes around him and glared at them "What are you looking at? SCRAM!"

"I am going to be eaten... I am going to be eaten....."

There was a green fish with a slight bit of spiritual awareness, but that was about it. He looked slightly retarded and was swimming in circles furiously.

"Mmm?"

This basin was rather small, it only contained Fang Yuan, the green fish and 2 other spotted fishes with no spiritual awareness.

The last fish was an interesting one.

"Hey you, where are you from?"

Fang Yuan wrestled through the crowd and said hi to a fish of his type.

In front of him, was another carp. The carp was much shorter

than Fang Yuan, he was only about half a foot, did not have much meat. He looked beautiful, had scales of a golden and reddish hue and long flowing whiskers. The carp looked similar to Fang Yuan when he was still of the 3rd transformation. The carp was either gifted with such good looks, or he had cultivated.

"...."

The Golden Red Carp looked at Fang Yuan and blew bubbles innocently.

"F*ck! Don't you dare play dumb with me.... Hey hey, we are caught and are about to be made into soup, if you have any tricks, this is the time to use it!"

Fang Yuan rammed into the carp.

The golden red carp merely stared at him, motionless.

"Could he really be a retard?"

Fang Yuan was out of options when he knew that this method could not work.

Not long after, the boat docked. With a jerk, the basin was lifted and brought into the pier.

"Fishes for sale!"

"Fishes for sale!"

.....

The pier was not very big, but there was still high human traffic and was quite crowded.

Fisherman filled the sides of the pier, selling fish.

"Ladies and gentleman, come take a look at my fishes! Freshly caught and still full of life!"

Although the fisherman spoke slightly differently, Fang Yuan could still make out what he was saying.

The fisherman picked up the green fish. The green fish was

flopping about furiously. If It was himself, he would have feigned death to prevent himself from being sold and cooked.

"My love, you must be tired after your long journey. These fishes looks good, how about I buy one for you to regain some strength?"

A couple walked to the stall.

Fang Yuan evaluated the couple. The man was in his early 20s, wore a green shirt and had a piece of jade hung around his waist, it was of good quality too. His pupils were of a deep black, he could feel the authority of an officer from his eyes. Following behind was a student, beside him was a sweet looking lady. She had difficulties moving and had a small belly and looked to be pregnant.

"My love! My love, this fisherman's fishes are the best!"

The fisherman saw the young man, and his eye sparkled "Look at how fresh these fishes are! Especially this golden red carp, that's a rare catch! A stew made with him would be very nutritious for the lady! "

"Oh, let me take a look!"

The officer wearing green shirt stopped and looked at the fishes.

Fang Yuan looked on coldly, but he caught the gaze of the fisherman. The fisherman was eyeing the jade piece on the officer and looked at the lady with a perverted gaze.

"They are indeed good, I have read somewhere that golden red carps possessed spiritual energy and would be great for my lady!"

He looked at his wife "My dear... What do you think?"

"Me?"

She hung her head low, she did not want her husband to spend so much on her and could not make a decision. She looked at the carp and was shocked "It...It seems to be crying!"

"Mmm?"

The officer saw it too "Wow, it is spiritually aware!"

"How could we kill something that was spiritually aware? My dear, how about we buy it and set it free?"

She looked at her husband, her eyes were filled with a loving gaze
"Let's take it as we are earning good karma for me and our children."

"Al... Alright!"

He would not have normally agreed to that, but the officer was feeling generous "We are getting this carp!"

"I really could not tell, he was the acting type!"

He looked at the teary eyes golden red carp and was speechless,
"You really are good, but I not really not thick-skinned enough!"

"That would be one silver, it is a golden carp after all!"

The fisherman was all smiles and decided to rip the couple off.

"That is very expensive, but for the sake of my wife and children, I will take it!"

The officer took out the money and paid him.

After paying, he pointed to fang yuan and the green fish, "Release the golden carp, but give me these 2 fishes, stew one, and steam one!"

"F*CK!!!!"

Chapter 263: Transformation

After he was bought, Fang Yuan managed to obtain the identity of the couple from the information he gathered along the way.

The green-robed official's surname was Xu and his name was Ren. He was a scholar of the Qinghe District and was a child prodigy. At the age of 12, he was chosen for and passed the imperial examinations to become an official. After being selected to become an official, he took a few servants with him and took up the position. The lady, Wan'er, was his wife and was 5 months pregnant.

The rides in the carriages of the ancient times were bumpy and were not suitable for a pregnant lady. Furthermore, the drainage system of this realm was developed. As such, Xu Ren chose to take the boat.

At the quay, he rented a small boat and travelled downstream in it.

As for Fang Yuan and the other 2 fishes, they were naturally brought to the kitchen.

It was noteworthy to mention that the golden carp was still there. It seemed that Xu Ren was either going to find another location to release it or consume it. Afterall, it could be considered a semi-spiritual object which would bring about benefits to the unborn child.

The sky outside grew dark and the kitchen started to become busy. The reddish-gold fish looked at Fang Yuan and the other fish with an expression of ridicule.

"Die die die..."

The big green fish was scared senseless and could only repeat these few words.

"Really...When I rely on the mountain, the mountain topples and

when I rely on the water, the water dries up [1]. In the end, I still have to rely on myself!"

Fang Yuan silently concentrated and was motionless.

The effects of his Dragon Stinging Formula were almost gone. As such, he was able to remain fearless in the face of death. Otherwise, if he was able to overcome his predicament just by crying, there was an 80% chance that he would do so even if he said that he was unwilling.

"A dragon can change its size, is able to soar or hide. When it is big, it is able to swallow clouds and blow out fog. When it is small, it is able to stay hidden. It is able to soar between universes and hide within the great waves..."

This Dragon Stinging Formula was a miraculous technique of the dragon race and was necessary to save his life.

Fang Yuan silently chanted the formula and felt threads of elemental energy moving rapidly within a dried up area within his body.

"It does not just take one step for a carp to transform into a dragon. Instead, it is the stimulation of the dragon properties within the body and creating an opportunity to transform into a dragon!"

Fang Yuan's eyes lit up with understanding as he thought of the content of the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula.

"How? Are we doing it?"

At this moment, a man's lofty voice was heard.

"That young master of the rich family is loaded. Did you see the amount of money he had when he was buying the fish? There must be dozens of silver taels. Furthermore, the jade hanging from his waist is no common grade item!"

This voice sounded very familiar. Fang Yuan realized that it was

the fisherman from before.

At the moment, the person who was doing odd jobs and the person tending to the fire started to gather. There was a total of 6 or 7 people, which caused Fang Yuan to sigh.

Xu Ren was blind to choose a black boat!

Those who lived in the mountains lived off the mountains while those who lived in the sea lived off the seas. While these fishermen led difficult lives, they were skilful for their livelihood. When they were halfway through the journey, they halted the boat and asked the official if he would like to eat homemade noodles or wonton noodles.

They were villagers of the mountains by day and pirates by night.

This fisherman had no time for civilities as well.

"Wait a minute, I feel that this lady's background is not so simple. I am afraid that she might have connections!"

"Old Jia, you are always afraid to die. Don't forget the previous time, we killed a 7th-grade official and toss his seal into the waters, who would be able to find it?"

"Bai Lilang, don't think that I do not know what you are thinking. You incite all of us as you have taken a liking for the lady?"

...

The group of professional pirates discussed passionately. In the end, Bai Lilang's proposition was favoured as those greedy pirates hooted.

"Let's do it! We do not see this type of fat goats[2] often!"

"Steal his gold and seize his wife!"

...

"Guys, I do not want the gold and silver this time around. I only

want his beautiful wife and I hope that you guys would not fight over her with me..."

The fisherman who captured Fang Yuan, Bai Lilang, cupped his hands, his face full of smiles.

"Since you have said so, we shall let you have the lady. The amount of gold and silver the fat goat has on his body is enough as compensation...haha...we can go to the brothel and find a few that are on par with the lady!"

"I want his jade!"

"Good, then it is decided. We should not drag this on any longer. We should strike now and drink the fish soup when we return to celebrate!"

Bai Lilang spoke in exultation.

It was hard to blame him as he had a plan. The boat was now in the centre of the river which was a prime danger area. Even if the information leaked out, what could the couple do?

"My master and his wife are waiting to eat the fish. What are you all standing around for?"

At this time, a servant walked into the kitchen, he was babbling when he witnessed the scene, which caused him to be stumped and confused.

"Pfft!"

In that instant, Bai Lilang lunged forward, drew out a dagger and stabbed him viciously.

The servant's eyes were glazed as he toppled over.

"Eat fish? Haha...go and drink soup in hell!"

Bai Lilang laughed out loud as he licked the blood from the corner of his mouth. He instructed the other pirates and they rushed out of the kitchen. Faint, indistinct cries echoed within the silent kitchen.

"Haha...this is retribution!"

Fang Yuan looked at the reddish-gold carp who was starting to panic and rejoiced. "That pirate do not care if you have spiritual energy. You are definitely becoming a soup for them!"

The reddish-gold carp glared at him but did not speak.

"Die, die, die!"

At the side, the green fish turned in circles, causing Fang Yuan to become dizzy.

"This is boring!"

In his heart, he shook his head. A shiny black sheen appeared on his body.

In the black light, Fang Yuan's body became elongated. His whiskers disappeared as he transformed into a 3 feet long black snake.

At this time, his stat window appeared and displayed his new stats:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: [Black Snake (10 years)]

Essence: 18

Spirit: 18

Magic: 18

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula (4th Transformation)], [Water Controlling Technique (Grade 3)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

Fang Yuan silently remembered and adapted to his new body.

"Crash!"

He deftly turned his body and slithered out of the basin onto the ground.

"The 4th transformation in the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula is known as the Black Snake Transformation. The dragon properties are stimulated and one is no longer limited to just the water!"

A flesh of a simple creature born in the water would turn into rock once it reached the shore.

However, after reaching the Black Snake Transformation, the situation was different.

Black was the colour of the water element [3], the black snake was also a water snake. As such, it was able to swim in the water and slither on land. If a common carp was able to reach this cultivation level, his path of Dao would have broadened.

"Die, die, die..."

The green fish was scared senseless after witnessing the transformation of the black fish into a black snake. It looked as if it was almost scared to death when it saw Fang Yuan spit out the seed[4].

Even the golden carp was dazed, its big eyes revealing its shock and fear.

"Stimulating the properties of a dragon, transforming into a black snake, other than the Water Controlling Technique, there must be other...however, I need to find this out myself!"

Fang Yuan lazily crawled beside the basin, lifted the big green fish and tossed it out of the window.

"Splash!"

The river was outside the window. With a dull thud, the green fish was tossed into the water and swam away speedily.

Onboard the boat, indistinct cries could be heard. Amidst the

massacre, there was no one to notice the empty kitchen and the direction in which a fish escaped in.

"Good, he escaped. Time for me to escape as well!"

Fang Yuan spoke loudly on purpose and started to climb towards the door.

"My fellow dao cultivator, wait!"

Indeed, the reddish-gold carp could stand it no longer and speak on its own accord.

Her voice was soft and silky. It was a girl...no, female.

"It seems like you know how to speak..."

Fang Yuan did not leave and instead, lay down beside the basin and gazed on. "I am starting to think that you are a mute!"

"..."

The reddish-gold carp was speechless. However, Fang Yuan predicted that she had already made up her mind.

"I did what I did previously as I had my difficulties. I am carrying a huge burden...please forgive me and save me!"

The reddish-gold carp started to beg.

She was well aware of the situation. If it was still the young lady Wan'er deciding, she had a big chance of surviving. If it was Xu Ren making the decision, there was a 50% chance she might be cooked. Now, it was the group of pirates making the decision. There was no way she could survive. As such, she could not care less and sought help from the mysterious black snake.

"You did not reveal your name even as you seek help. No sincerity!"

Fang Yuan spat out the seed.

"I am...Li Luan..."

"What did you do? Why did you end up here?"

Fang Yuan probed but the carp refused to reply.

"Nevermind.....I will help you since we are both water dwellers!"

Fang Yuan lifted the reddish-gold carp and prepared to toss her out of the window.

Afterall, he had regained half his stats. Although he looked like a black snake that was just 1 metre long, he was able to take on a Wu Zong in a fight.

"Wait!"

The reddish-gold carp continued to speak. "I...I am a criminal in the An River. I am afraid I cannot reveal myself in the river! Furthermore...I am in debt to the couple..."

"That is your debt...Xu Ren wanted to boil me!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes.

The reddish-gold carp roughly understood Fang Yuan's character and spoke immediately. "If you were to help me, I am willing to give you some benefits!"

"Make yourself clear first!"

At this moment, the shouting onboard had started to die out. It was obvious that the situation was critical.

Li Luan had no choice and could only reveal what she had in mind. "I know of a water mansion with 20 pearls, 30 pieces of beautiful jade, and a bottle of spiritual pills which is greatly beneficial to our types!"

"Hehe...you are no ordinary carp to know about all these!"

Fang Yuan laughed coldly but pursue the matter no further. Instead, he turned into a streak of black lightning as he headed towards the deck.

"Although I do not owe Xu Ren a favour, I have a grudge against Bai Lilang and I must have my revenge!"

On the floor, there was bloodstain everywhere as the maids and servants lay in the pool of blood. In the master bedroom, shelves were toppled and voices could be heard.

"You...how dare you, I am an official of the imperial court!"

Xu Ren's voice could be heard. There was also cries of shock from the lady.

"Hehe! So what if you are an official. It is not like I have not killed an official before..."

Bai Lilang laughed nastily. He yearned for the beautiful lady and could not wait to kill Xu Ren and seize his wife.

[1] The author means that Fang Yuan had no one to rely upon as they were unreliable.

[2] fat goat is used to refer to those who are extremely rich.

[3] Traditionally, the 5 elements are assigned a colour each and the water element was assigned the colour black.

[4] seed of a hyacinth plant

Chapter 264: The Route by Land

Xu Ren wielded a long sword and protected his wife. Looking at the approaching robbers, sweat started to drip from his forehead.

He had little training in martial arts but could not be considered as a martial artist. Although his chances were slim against the robbers, he had no other choice but to protect his wife with all his life.

"Thud! Thud!"

Unknowingly, the two robbers behind fell to the ground, unconscious.

Shock, one of the robbers went forward and tried to feel for their breaths. "Boss, their dead!"

"Hisss!"

As a hissing sound was heard, another one of them fell to the ground after a black flash.

"Snake! There's a snake!"

The murderer slithered on the ground and all of them could see it clearly.

"Isn't it just a snake?"

Bai Lilang was the bravest. Unknowingly, he was fearful at the beginning but now, he was full of courage. "Look at me kill it!"

With that, he struck his knife.

"Clang!"

As the blade of the knife sliced across the scales of the snake, sparks were formed as the blade was deflected away.

"How is this possible?"

Bai Lilang was shocked.

"Demon... Demon!"

The fishermen around all screamed and escaped in all directions.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

This time, the black snake arched its body and shot out at the fishermen one by one.

As blood spurted everywhere, wounds opened up in every fishermen's chest. All of them fell to the ground.

"Ghost.... Ah!!! Ghost!"

Bai Lilang was utterly shocked. His legs turned to jelly and he started to pee in his pants.

"This body is indeed useful!"

After testing out his new body, Fang Yuan was satisfied with it. After all, it was much stronger than the black carp. Seeing Bai Lilang getting on his knees to beg him, he snickered. "It's alright if you harm others, but how dare you harm me? You should go to hell!"

With that, he slithered forward and ended Bai Lilang's life.

"Ah... Is this snake the one that saved us?"

Wan'er had not recovered from her previous shock. As she got to her feet, she was in disbelief as she looked at the black snake, with its scales glistering under the candlelight.

"It's me!"

Fang Yuan spoke in the human language as soon as he opened his mouth.

"Demon... Demon!"

Wan'er turned pale and almost fainted.

"Wan'er, don't be afraid. There are good people and bad people. Since this snake saved our lives, it must be a good demon!"

Xu Ren tidied his robes before bowing to the snake. "I am Xu Ren. Thank you for saving our lives! We are grateful for your help and will repay your kindness..."

"Forget it!"

The snake looked down. A black smoke rose from the snake's head, revealing Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit.

"I am Fang Yuan. It is only a little fate that I am here to rescue you. However, I have something that I need you to do!"

"As long as it is legal and moral, I will do it!"

Seeing Fang Yuan reveal his Yin Spirit, Xu Ren was even more certain that he was a powerful demon and started to sound more respectful.

"Mm, it's nothing much. The Golden Red Carp needs to make use of your human karma to protect it for its journey ahead!"

Fang Yuan came straight to the point.

In reality, he was considering for himself.

After all, the three demons from Qi Lake were chasing after him. Although he had already changed his appearance, it was still troublesome for him to journey through the river. Therefore, he had thought of journey together with the humans to conceal himself and have a smooth journey ahead.

No matter how creative the demons were, they would never be able to think of such a method of transport.

Xu Ren wanted to go to Golden Lake Prefecture and it was on the shore of the Golden Court Lake, so it was along the way.

"For protection? I only know little martial arts and have little human karma..."

Xu Ren was confused and felt as though he was about to get in a lot of trouble.

However, he knew he could not bear the consequences if they were to get into a fight.

"If I say you're qualified, it means you are!"

Fang Yuan snickered. "Unless... you are an ungrateful brat?"

As he was a demon, he realised his demonic vibes. Xu Ren's hand went numb as his sword fell to the ground.

'He has the upper hand now, so I should obey him... Who would've thought that I have just left danger but now, I'm back to danger...'

Xu Ren sighed in his mind and bowed respectfully. "Why would I dare to disobey?"

"Haha, very well!"

Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit returned as he slithered up the bed. "Bring the boat alongside and settle the minor stuff... Also, bring the Golden Red Carp to me!"

"Yes, sir!"

Xu Ren promptly obeyed. As he walked into the rooms, he saw his subordinates lying in pools of blood and felt sorrowful.

His wife was in shock after seeing all the dead bodies and was on the verge of a miscarriage. After consoling her for a long while, she finally calmed down.

Not long after, Xu Ren indeed shifted Li Luan to the bedroom and dismissed himself. As for how to alongside the boat and inform the officials, he had to figure it out on his own.

...

After the corpses were shifted out, the rooms became much more spacious.

Xu Ren and her wife didn't dare to fall asleep. They had let out their room as a form of respect to the black snake.

As water lapped on the hull of the boat, there was a dim candlelight in one of the rooms.

"Why are you still hiding?"

Fang Yuan released his Yin spirit and stared at the bowl with Li Luan in it.

The Golden Red Carp had no other choice and started to close its eyes.

In a bright flash, a beautiful lady which resembled a deity appeared in the room.

Around her, there were streaks of water which made her look magical and immortal.

"You Yin Spirit... is injured! If it was daytime, I'm afraid you can't even release your Yin Spirit!"

Seeing this, Fang Yuan shook his head.

The cultivation of one's Yin Spirit was, in essence, creating something from nothing. The more real it appears, the higher the cultivation.

Take for instance the young man Fang Yuan was now. He had flesh and blood and appeared like a real person.

Comparatively, the lady's Yin Spirit was extremely flickering and people would think that she was a ghost.

However, Fang Yuan could tell that her Yin Spirit was as such due to her injury and not the lack of cultivation.

"I cannot maintain my spirit long, I'll apologise for that first!"

Li Luan bowed and her face was flushed. As she apologised, she transformed into a fog and returned to her physical body.

"Mmm. Who did you anger?"

Seeing her, Fang Yuan became interested and casually asked.

"... It's the An River Dragon God!"

Li Luan replied honestly and sighed.

After all, the demon before her was extremely smart and could roughly guess her predicament even if she tried to hide. Therefore, it was useless to hide and the fact that she was wanted throughout the entire river was something that she could not hide for long.

"Good! I like your style!"

Fang Yuan smiled. After all, he only angered a few demons and upcoming Water God but was already in such a state.

This lass had much more personality to anger a Dragon God!

To be called a dragon god, he had to have a dragon body and an imperial order. Even the powerful demons in Qi Lake would not dare to make him angry.

"How did you piss him off?"

There was a hint of curiosity in his eyes.

"This is a secret and I cannot say it!"

Li Luan was adamant. "It's no use... in fact, if you know about it, it will bring you trouble!"

What do you intend to do not?"

Fang Yuan could tell that regardless of how powerful Li Luan was previously, she was helpless now. Her Yin Spirit was but a flickering figure which was unable to seduce any mortals.

"Since you have already made the arrangements, why ask me?"

Li Luan countered and replied. "To travel by the methods of humans to reach another region is indeed a good idea!"

"Hey, did you ask me before joining me on my journey? Be careful, I might just throw you overboard!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes.

"Didn't you tell Xu Ren that I wanted to ride on their human karma to avoid trouble?"

Li Luan gave a pitiful look.

Seeing Fang Yuan's expressionless face, she could only surrender. "What do you want? I know of a few places with treasure and a few recordings of the classics and some techniques..."

'This lass is not simple... What a pity she's not experienced enough and would easily be taken advantage of...'

Fang Yuan gave a look of submission. "Alright! I'll help you today, and we'll slowly discuss my rewards later!"

Although he was not a person who would risk it all, after all, he would not really die in this realm. Therefore, it was only logical to take the biggest risks to reap the biggest rewards.

...

Xu Ren seemed smart. After a short while of figuring things out, he finally learnt how to control the ship and brought it safely alongside.

Following which, he quickly found some farmers and tasked them to report to the district court.

It was a big thing for a ship to have so many corpses. In a short moment, many constables arrived on the ship.

If it was a normal businessman on the ship, he would be pinned a murderer.

However, with his name and his status, the treatment he received was different. He quickly reported that Bai Lilang and company were the murderers, and spent some money to do a proper burial for his subordinates. Everything was smooth-going and three days later, they had slipped off and were on their way again.

To Fang Yuan and Li Luan, all these didn't matter.

In fact, being far from underwater meant that they could avoid a lot of stalking, which was a good thing to them.

"This district town is rather lively..."

In a carriage, there was a fish tank. In it, a Golden Red Carp swam about freely, and it was a weird sight to behold.

What was more intriguing was the fact that there was a dull sound coming from beside Xu Ren. A snake head popped out from his collar as the snake peeked around with curiosity.

"Benefactor, you're right! The people managing this district are doing a good job!"

Xu Ren was pale.

Anyone who had a poisonous and deadly killer snake slithering around their bodies would not look lively.

This was Fang Yuan's way of controlling him.

Otherwise, Fang Yuan would be afraid that he might go back on his words and hire monks or Daoists to deal with him.

Humans would have the instinct to survive. If Xu Ren were to anger Fang Yuan, he might be killed on the way there. Therefore, he had to obey.

It seemed that Fang Yuan's method was working.

Xu Ren put in his best effort and did not dare to do anything else out of the ordinary.

After all, he wouldn't want to risk his own life!

"There are quite a number of temples and monasteries along the way... It seems that demons and ghosts rule this realm..."

Seeing this, Fang Yuan shook his head.

Chapter 265: Prediction

With the help of the educated Xu Ren, Fang Yuan started to understand the people of this realm.

Based on Xu Ren's description, they were in a country called 'Da Chu'. North of Da Chu were countries like 'Da Qi', 'Da Liang' and others, and these three countries were coexisting together while having tension at the same time.

Since history, Da Chu had been here for 10 centuries and had slowly become weaker over the years. With their geographical disadvantage, it was getting harder and harder for the Imperial Court to exert their control over the country.

Of course, to those who were aware of the situation, they would know that Da Chu still had about 10 over years to go. However, there were still a few unavoidable small conflicts within the country.

"The Golden Lake Prefecture is on the shore of the Golden Court Lake. People do live here, but there are two big threats. Firstly, there were pirates. Secondly, demons would create chaos here. Out of these two, demons had posed the bigger problem!"

Xu Ren looked at Fang Yuan and let out a long sigh.

He had felt depressed for long and had no one to confide to. However, after spending so many days together, he spilt the beans.

"Oh? Why is that so?"

Fang Yuan became interested and probed further.

It seemed that the place was filled with spiritual energy. With that, demons and spirits would be attracted there, especially so since the waterways were extremely connected. If it were the Water Gods or Dragon Gods which came, it would be alright as they were already being prayed to in temples. Powerful demons would have their temples and offerings would be considered as a

protection fee. Therefore, these demons and spirits would not easily attack humans.

However, for the rest of them, they were cruel in nature and only wanted to eat humans. They were not given any offerings and had to survive like insects, which meant that they could do anything they wanted.

Further probing from Fang Yuan made him realise that a demon as powerful as him would be worthy of a temple and offerings, and this made him speechless.

The power and influence of demons in this world was unbelievable.

After explaining further, he appeared sorrowful.

"If I was the official for this place, I would clear the evil demon, spirits and pirates and maintain peace in the area!"

As he spoke, Xu Ren slowly became affected by Fang Yuan. His face flushed as he exclaimed. "Eh... What did the people do to deserve the demon's pestering? When can we restore peace?"

"Husband!"

Wan'er tugged at Xu Ren's sleeves. As he became alert, he realised that two demons were blocking their way with a cunning look on their faces.

"Haha... I'll settle them!"

Fang Yuan released his Yin Spirit and revealed a normal looking man in black. With a smile, he waved his hands. "My friend and I do not feed on blood. However, in this world, it is the survival of the fittest. If the people Dao want to move up, they should not depend on demons, but strengthen themselves! The world will still revolve and the people Dao will have to adapt! If they can understand this, they will develop!"

"Survival of the fittest? The world will still revolve, and the

people will have to adapt?"

Xu Ren's eyes glittered as though he had understood something. Suddenly, he got up, tidied his robes and bowed towards Fang Yuan, full of sincerity. "Benefactor, you are a genius! Although the books have not recorded anything like this before, it seems like something I can resonate with! We have to adapt to develop... Although I was still at lost at what I should do with regards to the Golden Lake Prefecture, I am clear of what I need to do now."

"Bloop! Bloop!"

In the fish tank, the Golden Red Carp spoke as bubbles floated up. "Brother, what you said is true. However, why are you helping the humans? Are you trying to be one of them? Although Xu Ren might understand it, I don't think he can put these words into action!"

"What nonsense are you spouting?"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes. His Yin Spirit was in the form of a human and he only spoke what he thought was logical. However, the Golden Red Carp could even talk about him trying to be one of them, making him speechless.

"You should know that the dragon energy in humans is different from the dragon properties in us demons. Furthermore, I am only a weak demon. How would I dare to think of such absurd things? Am I not afraid of tribulations from the heavens?"

With the existence of the imperial order, people and demons in this realm believed in fate.

However, to Fang Yuan, it was all bullsh*t.

What was fate? It would be a mere experience for the physical body!

Even demons would be able to cultivate and become a water dragon. Naturally, they would be strengthened by the violet energy and therefore, they would not care about fate.

As for the practice among humans to provide offerings in temples, he couldn't care less about it.

After all, this practice would get them involved too much and would make them rely too much on the demons and in turn, they would be easily controlled by the demons and therefore had to consider many things. Instead, there would be much more freedom to cultivating as a demon.

"Everyone would have the ability to decide their own futures!"

As he silently sighed, he closed his eyes and continued his cultivation.

In the past few days, he had also ordered Xu Ren to go to the riverbank and retrieve the treasures which Li Luan had described the location of. Indeed, there were gold ingots, silver ingots, jade and a few spiritual pills. With those, Fang Yuan swallowed them and continued his cultivation.

As he closed his eyes, a golden pearl vibrated in his stomach and released a warm glow.

Ever since he had attempted to leap the Dragon's Gate and obtaining a hint of dragon property, he became ever more connected with the Dragon Pearl. Although he still could not absorb it, he could harness its glow to slowly change his own snake body.

'A rope can cut a tree and drops of water can cut through a rock with time. If I use my dragon property to try digesting the Dragon Pearl every day, I'm sure I will benefit from it and it will surely give me an advantage in transforming into a dragon in the future!'

In the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula, there would be a huge breakthrough required after every 3 transformations.

From a carp to a snake, it was called Carp Leaping over the Dragon's Gate. After success, he would gain some dragon

properties and would no longer be restricted to the water.

At the 6 transformations, from the giant venomous snake transformation to the horned dragon transformation, it was another huge breakthrough, called Dragon Transformation Stage. There would be tribulation from the heavens at this stage!

Fang Yuan guessed that the tribulations were a form of returning the favour! After all, after taking in spiritual energy for cultivation, they have to be some form of retribution.

"Cultivation can be split into internal cultivation and external cultivation. With the Dragon Pearl, I should be able to fulfil the internal cultivation of the Dragon Transformation Stage... However, there is still a tribulation that awaits!"

Fang Yuan was lost in his thoughts. "Based on the rules of reality which governs this realm, with karma, one would be able to reduce the intensity of the tribulation... of course, it would only reduce the intensity but not remove it completely. It is still up to the individual to survive the tribulation..."

Suddenly, he opened his eyes as though he had thought of something. "Heavenly karma can be used to reduce the intensity of the tribulations. People karma, on the other hand, can be used to reduce the intensity of people tribulations... Previously, the Water God of Qi Lake had inadequate powers. Although he had enough heavenly karma and was able to delay the day of the heavenly tribulation, he did not have sufficient people karma. With the powerful people tribulation and the fact that his body was weak, he could only go down... However, since he had enough heavenly karma, he would be given a chance to try again... Wait a minute, I seemed to have become the people tribulation of the Water God, as I have taken his backup Dragon Pearl with me... This Water God is really unlucky!"

"However... People! Do they refer to humans as people or demons as people?"

Fang Yuan was stunned.

This was the question as to who would rule the world and how the world would revolve. If understood, he would benefit from it.

Initially, the power and influence of demons would make them the people of the realm.

However, the Water God of Qi Lake had offered protection to many fishes and creatures living in the lake and even distributed his wealth before undergoing his tribulation. If demons were the people, then he should have quite a lot of people karma instead.

"Therefore... there is only one explanation. The god had identified the people wrongly?"

Fang Yuan was utterly shocked. "Although the demons are powerful, humans would be the last ones standing?"

It was unclear, to begin with. As he slowly understood everything, he realised the truth of the world.

Even a strong demon like the Water God of the Qi Lake couldn't break through. This was because it was too early for him to know.

With the demons having everything their way, how would the other species dare to fight against them?

However, since Fang Yuan was from another realm, he had a different point of view and could instantly see through the confusion.

"The demons would fall and the humans would prosper; this would be the trend in this world!"

"The fact that everybody's Yin Spirit was in the form of a human was an explanation for the trend of the world, and not for convenience and standardization sake!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

"Rumble!"

At this time, there was an explosion heard. Normal people would be shocked but Fang Yuan felt fear.

"Eh? Something's not right?"

Xu Ren pulled the curtains. Sunlight filled the carriage and a gentle breeze caressed his face. "Why would there be a lightning strike out of nowhere?"

He was a mortal, and so was his wife. Both of them shivered in fear.

As for Li Luan, she froze in the fish tank as though she could feel the power from the heavens.

"To detect something even before it happened..."

Fang Yuan acted as though he was shocked, but smiled inside. "It seems that my prediction is correct... There must be a few unique people in this realm who are able to see this fact. Some of them would create trouble while others would remain in hiding, waiting for the perfect opportunity to gather all the tribulations and make use of it to form the Killer Tribulation!"

This was Fang Yuan's chance.

Even though he had the realm evidence and had come from another world, he was still a demon. If he were to do something out of the ordinary, he had to make sure that it was 10 times more extreme than the usual! A 100 times!

With the Killer Tribulation in place, everyone's fate would be intertwined and it was his time to perform.

"It seems that... I'll still have to support the people!"

Fang Yuan snickered, but this time, he looked at Xu Ren with a different expression.

Fang Yuan originally wanted to make use of him and abandon him after he had reached the Golden Court Lake. However, it seems that he would have to continue to use him even after

reaching the Golden Court Lake.

"Just now... what happened?"

Li Luan hid in the fish tank and curled up into a ball.

As the thunder roared, she could feel the power of the heaven tribulation.

In front of a powerful thunder like that, even the strongest version of her would crumble into powder!

"Did someone anger the heavens? If that is so, why are the tribulations not happening?"

After a long while, nothing happened in the vicinity. Li Luan mustered her strength and composed herself as she looked at Fang Yuan with a weird expression.

This demon was extremely powerful and could even transform from a carp to a snake. This was something never heard of.

Furthermore, after spending many days with him, Li Luan could feel that the power and energy within him was not something a simple poisonous snake could harness. These were signs of an increase in dragon properties.

The speed at which he was gaining his dragon properties was shocking.

It was possible for someone to believe that Fang Yuan was the one who angered the heavens.

However, the snake was upright and looking upwards into the sky with a shock expression, but was unharmed. With that, Li Luan became confused.

Chapter 266: River God

The Golden Lake Prefecture laid on the boundary of the Golden Court Lake. In the prefecture, there were 10,000 families and 55,000 people living here.

Although there were no majestic mountains and little farms, they relied on the Golden Court Lake to survive. They were living the average life; although not well-to-do, they were not poor as well.

In the prefecture, there were 5 districts and these districts were famous for their rice and silk.

Of course, the people here liked to pray and give offerings as well. Many different types of spirits would roam about and eat humans. The humans could live off harvesting different resources from the Golden Court Lake. As long as they were willing to work hard, they would be rewarded and their family would be able to survive. As for the unlucky 0.1% who would end up in the demon's stomach, they could only blame it on their bad luck.

Comparatively, the people living here had quite a high quality of life. Therefore, more and more people would shift here.

Scholars would exclaim that 'the harsh government is fiercer than the demons around'!

Regardless, after 10 over years, nothing had changed.

Xu Ren was tasked to one of the five districts here; to be the district minister of Black Lake District.

In the hierarchy of Da Chu Country, in every district, there would be a district leader, a person who was in control of a 100-mile radius of the district. The district leader would be a 7th Grade official. Additionally, there would be an 8th Grade official assigned as the district minister. In reality, the district minister was only a backup and was only required to learn from the district leader and do nothing else.

In the district town, there would be a district lieutenant, main assistant and the Six Division Ministers. All of them would have their own roles to play. It was similar to an enlarged sparrow; all of its organs have their own roles to play for the sparrow to survive, and this was similar in the prefecture governing system, and even the Imperial Court.

As Xu Ren arrived at Black Lake District, he first paid his greetings to the district leader before taking over from the previous district minister. Afterwards, he consulted his colleagues on an auspicious day for him to formally take up the appointment. All of the minute stuff made everything much more complicated.

Even Wan'er had to carry her unborn baby around and help out.

However, all of these were none of Fang Yuan and Li Luan's business.

Looking at how they were right now, they would instead scare people off.

In the backyard of the Xu Family Mansion, in a small pond, Fang Yuan laid within some seaweed and lazily looked up.

As nightfall drew closer, the front yard was brightly lighted up, and there were the sounds of a bamboo flute. It was Xu Ren inviting his colleagues to spend the night in his house.

"The fate energy of the people Dao is indeed interesting!"

Fang Yuan mustered up his demonic strength, opened his spiritual eye and noticed the changes happening in the front yard.

In his view, there was a bright glow shooting straight up into the sky, as though it was a warning for others not to get too close.

"This is especially so for Xu Ren. Previously, I've not felt much from him. However, after he became district minister, his fate energy has increased exponentially... Of course, I can still kill him if I want to, but the tribulations that would follow would be worrying..."

"When humans of the people Dao gather, they would strengthen their fate energy. However, this is because the people are gathered around him and is temporary. They are different from us. If our fate energy were to be increased, it would be buried deep in our bones. As long as we are alive, out fate energy would remain!"

In the pond, a Golden Red Carp poked her head out as Li Luan's voice was heard.

"That's true!"

Fang Yuan knew the difference between humans and demons and nodded his head.

"Li Luan, are you deciding to stay here?"

He looked at the Golden Red Carp and asked curiously.

"Hmm... There's an auspicious aura in this mansion and is suitable for me to rest and recuperate here!"

Li Luan sounded determined. However, in reality, she wanted to take advantage of the protection that came with Xu Ren's strong fate energy.

Fang Yuan already knew her intentions but did not expose her. As he smiled, he slithered out of the mansion.

In was nightfall. With his black body and enormous strength, he moved like the wind and was undetectable.

Using this chance, he explored the district town. The first impression he had was that there were too many people around, and the second impression was that there were too many temples! Too many of them!

There were Water God temples, General Temples, Lake God Temples and many more, confusing him.

Taking a closer look, he realised that there were many types of demons. Although there were righteous gods who only offered protection, the majority were evil demons often feasting on blood

offerings.

"It has reached such a stage where the demons use fear to rule over their followers!"

Fang Yuan sighed. "Even the officials can't handle the demons. They can only resort to allowing them to stay and rewarding them in exchange for peace. This is pitiful..."

Of course, karma was real and for everything that the demons had done today, they would have to pay back another day.

These demons and gods were now enjoying the offerings from humans. However, in the event of a Killer Tribulation, they might not even dare to step out and admit their doings.

However, it was reasonable considering that this was the prevailing trend in the area.

At least, Fang Yuan could guess that since many people were using their people Dao karma to reduce the intensity of their tribulations, their tribulations would be much easier. This would make the good gods stronger and they might be able to change the demons in the future.

Regardless of how evil-looking a god might appear, as long as the god had enough followers, the impression of him would change and become more acceptable to the public.

This was the idea of using followers to become acceptable and approved by the public.

"The god dao could be approved at the prefecture level. Most of the time, the district leader would send the letter of approval and the prefecture would usually approve it... Xu Ren, did you mention about building a temple to worship me? How about 'Black Dragon General's Temple'?"

As his thoughts ran wild, he leapt into a small river.

"Splash!"

As soon as he entered the water, he felt extremely comfortable.

Although he had transformed into a snake, he still retained many qualities of a carp. This was akin to giving a fish its water.

"Great!"

Fang Yuan slowly executed his techniques and could feel a huge amount of water-type spiritual energy rushing towards him at an unbelievable speed. He was overjoyed. "It seems that I have developed a lot after leaping through the Dragon's Gate! With such a speed of absorbing spiritual energy and the fact that the Dragon Pearl is within me, I don't have to feed on others every day!"

To complete the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula, he would require a lot of resources.

Previously, Fang Yuan had no choice but to kill and eat fishes to absorb their elemental energy.

With his newly-acquired dragon properties, he could now absorb the spiritual energy from nature. With the assistance of the Dragon Pearl, there was no need for him to kill and eat fishes at the rate which he was doing previously.

'Does this mean I have completed the elementary stages of absorbing energy from blood and flesh?'

A weird thought popped up in Fang Yuan's head. "From now onwards, I would disguise myself. Although I am now different from the rest, our innate ability is to be a thief! To steal from the heavens! To steal from the Dao!"

Regardless of how improved his methods of absorbing energy were, he still could not run away from the fact that he was stealing energy from something else, be it animals or the air.

In the teaching of Dao, there were 5 types of thieves. Anyone who could realise these five would have a smooth sailing future!!!

Beneath the water, he was extremely fast. Like a black arrow, he

quickly darted through the river and arrived at a larger river. Following the flow of current, he reached the Golden Court Lake.

"Rumble!"

The moment he entered the lake, Fang Yuan could feel the concentrated spiritual energy rushing towards him, making him intoxicated.

"Very good! Such a normal lake can have such concentrated spiritual energy! If I am able to find a spiritual underwater mountain range, I could build a mansion there!"

Fang Yuan's cultivation had changed from eating other smaller creatures to absorbing elemental energy from nature.

Therefore, he no longer chose the place with fishes as his cultivation point. Rather, he now preferred places with concentrated spiritual energy.

"Even though I have already understood this realm and the trend of it, without power, how can I follow the trend?"

He swam around before settling down and concealing his spiritual aura. After searching for a few underwater spiritual mountain ranges, he was speechless. "The better spiritual mountain ranges are already taken up by a few stronger spirits. Why would they leave the good ones lying around untouched?"

It was possible to snatch, but he had to consider the consequences carefully.

After all, he was a visitor and if he were to anger them, they might surround him and attack him together.

"Fortunately, I have already reached the black snake transformation. If I was still in the body of a black carp, I would be high profile and everyone in this lake might just come after me the next day!"

Thinking about it, Fang Yuan held back, turned around and

headed back for Black Lake District Town.

"Greetings, benefactor!"

Xu Ren had just ended his dinner and smelled of alcohol.

However, just by seeing Fang Yuan in black, he quickly sobered up, bowed and appeared humble.

"The Golden Court Lake seems good, and I feel like staying here for long!"

As soon as Fang Yuan opened his mouth, Xu Ren felt relieved. He was afraid that this snake might pester his family for his entire life.

"However... you owe me a temple. How do you intend to resolve this?"

Fang Yuan asked.

"This... after going through the relevant authorities, I still need some time. It is especially hard to find a good plot of land these days!"

There was a look of uneasiness on Xu Ren's face, but he had spoken the truth.

He had to go through the district leader for this, submit an official application to the prefecture and therefore, the process would already take up a few days.

Of course, most importantly, getting a plot of land was not the issue.

There were already many temples and demons in the city. How would there be space for one more?

"Haha... This is easy. Let me ask you. Are there any cruel gods and demons around that like to feed on humans? If so, how about capturing them to boost your profile?"

Fang Yuan laughed.

"If that is so, thank you, benefactor!"

As Xu Ren heard Fang Yuan, there was a look of joy on his face.

...

Half a month later, in Heizi River.

"Water God requires sacrifice from a young boy and a young girl. Quickly send them over!"

By the side of the river, a sorcerer was mumbling. Her face was painted as she shouted at the villagers, threatening them.

"Didn't we give our offerings twice this year already..."

"Eh, it's greedy and we have no choice..."

"What a pity, Yang Wa and Yu Wa..."

...

As the villagers sighed, they wanted to resist but didn't have the courage to.

Even their leader could only sigh.

"The time is up!"

As the sorcerer looked at them, her face was gleaming. With the thought that she would be able to trick the villagers of more money throughout the year, she quickly put in more effort in convincing them. "Please deliver your offerings to the river!"

"Wait up!"

At this point in time, there was a voice heard.

A few constables opened up a path. Xu Ren wore an official's robes and appeared majestic. With a sense of justice, he continued. "Don't move!"

"It's the district minister! Greetings, district minister!"

The village leader quickly greeted him.

Although the district minister was only an assistant to the

district leader, he was still an 8th Grade official of the Imperial Court. The village leader was in no position to disrespect him.

As he greeted Xu Ren, the rest followed suit.

"It's the district minister?"

The sorcerer let out a cackle. "The Water God in Heizi River is approved by the Imperial Court as well. Are you stopping the Water God from enjoying his offerings? If he becomes infuriated, it's none of my business!"

"It's not that!"

Seeing such a demon, a hint of anger flashed in Xu Ren's eyes. Quicky, his expression changed to a gentle one, and he smiled. "The young boy and girl are too skinny and are imperfect. Sorcerer, please enter the river and tell the Water God that I'll search for a better sacrifice for him to enjoy!"

With this, he continued to prompt her. "Come on, please enter the river!"

Chapter 267: Evil Dragon

"Yes, Sir!"

The constables following Xu Ren were rewarded heavily by him. With a ferocious stance, they went up, grabbed the sorcerer and tossed her into the water.

The sorcerer struggled but alas, she was only a skinny only woman being thrown into a deep river. After a few shrieks, she sank into the water and was no longer seen.

"This..."

The people who were giving their offerings were shocked.

Although they had seen unreasonable tortures by the officials before, most of these tortures were only executed on the weak and poor people. None of them would dare to go against a god.

But now, did the newly appointed district minister just sacrificed the sorcerer to the Water God?

Within seconds, the timid ones among them started to feel the jitters.

"Oh? The sorcerer is not back. Could she have forgotten about us? How about someone go down and take a look?"

After saving the two children from becoming sacrifices, Xu Ren smirked.

No one dared to look at him in the eye.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

At this moment, the calm water began to bubble.

A black shadow emerged and bubbles floated up, together with blood and a few drapes of cloth. It was a horrific scene to behold.

"Wa! Wa!"

A child's cry was heard, and it was ear piercing.

"It's the Water God! The Water God is enraged!"

The villagers were panicking. Some of them looked at Xu Ren with hatred.

'Hmph! If not for my low rank, I would've wiped out all of such evil offering practices!'

Xu Ren was composed and his thoughts were clear.

Since he had brought people with him to interrupt the offering practice, he would have been prepared.

At this point in time, at the opposite side of the river, a black shadow flashed as Fang Yuan leapt into the water.

He was extremely quick and went straight to the River God. At that moment, he could see how the River God looked like.

It was about 10 feet long, completely black with a flat head and 4 legs. It was an andrias, a variation of a salamander.

"Wa! Wa!"

The andrias had eaten the sorcerer and wanted to send a wave of water to flood the people ashore. As soon as it saw Fang Yuan, it was stunned and let out a crying sound of a baby.

"It's horrible!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered. "Water spear technique!"

"Whoosh!"

His control over water was delicate and powerful now, and the water spear that he conjured was a sky blue and was much more hardy than before.

"Wa! Wa!"

The andrias knew that the water spear was powerful. With a shriek, many white pearls were spat out of its mouth.

As the pearl glittered, the imagery of the spirits of a young boy and girl appeared. However, the two children had bloodshot eyes,

sharp teeth and claws and were protecting the andrias.

"Are these servant spirits?"

Fang Yuan was stunned.

There was a saying from a long time ago which goes 'Being a servant for the Tiger'. This saying meant that the powerful spirits would eat people and capture their souls, turning them into their own servants.

This was the case for the andrias.

Furthermore, seeing all the pearls in front of him, the number of killings the andrias had done was shocking.

Seeing this, Fang Yuan was shocked. "Demon, you've sinned. Even if the heavens would let you off, I wouldn't!"

In reality, after understanding that the trend of the realm was the downfall of the demons and the uprising of the humans, all of Fang Yuan's actions were pro-humans. Since the andrias had killed numerous humans, its fate energy would be weakened and it would surely meet its downfall. Therefore, there would not be further complications after killing this andrias, and there was no need to worry about any backing that it might have.

This was taking actions according to heaven's will, which would make things simpler. If one were to go against heaven's will, it would not be just doubly hard, but one would have to be prepared to face tribulations from the heavens as well.

"Shake!"

As he mustered his demonic strength, a ripple emerged from the tip of the water spear.

The spirits of the young boy and girl were stunned and froze at their spots.

"Ah!"

As the spirits were destroyed, the water spear continued on and

struck on the body of the andrias, penetrating through. It continuously shrieked in pain, and its Yin Spirit emerged. "You cannot kill me! I am the official Heizi River God, appointed by the Imperial Court!"

"Go f*ck yourself!"

Fang Yuan's Yin spirit emerged and struck its claw out, crushing the andrias's Yin Spirit within his hands.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

As soon as the Yin Spirit was dead, the andrias lost its breath and started to sink down.

The many spirits among the pearls floated around. If left untouched, they would become a group of water spirits and would trouble people.

"Sigh..."

Fang Yuan released a water current and collected all the pearls together.

"It seems that these pearls are made from the bones of people. In every pearl, there is a sealed spirit in it. It must have used a demonic fire to smelt these pearls and transform them into powerful servant spirits..."

As he thought about the techniques he had browsed through before, he released his spiritual will and fiddled with the bone pearls.

"Crackle!"

After an explosion, the demonic energy of the andrias was wiped off the bone pearls, and the spirits in the 49 pearls were released.

"Contain!"

Although the technique was different, Fang Yuan could still attempt the general technique of containing spirits. Quickly, he pointed his finger at the many spirits.

"Wa! Wa!"

Most of the powerful spirits were unwilling to be contained, but alas, they were too weak to fight back. Since all of them had marks from the first time they were smelted into the pearls, they did not have the strength to resist. Soon, all of them were contained in their pearls, and the pearls were strung together to form a lace.

"Although this is cruel, it will be rather useful..."

Fang Yuan shook his head, sighed and looked into the water.

He could see a few red runes glowing, and it was as though they formed a talisman.

"The Imperial Order? And the many years of cultivation of the andrias?"

Thinking about it, he did not directly take the Imperial Order over. Instead, he used his technique on it and the talisman hardened, forming a block of jade which landed in his hands.

"It doesn't seem powerful... Could it be due to the fact that it is only a title of Da Chu Country?"

Comparing it to the Water God of the Qi Lake, Fang Yuan could tell the difference. "A real god has to be appointed by the heavens as well for it to be authentic! If it was like this Water God, it is only a fake and can only be appointed by the heavens based on its luck. If the andrias could harness all the spiritual energy in Heizi River today, I would not be able to defeat it so easily..."

"However, since the trend of the realm is towards the people dao, it would be extremely easy to gain the appointment from the heavens if I were to protect humans!"

This was the trend of the realm.

To allow a few righteous gods to become strong and powerful so that they could support the human Dao!

One would have to experience it for oneself in order to know the

slow but influential power of the heavens!

It would be all these accumulative events that would lead to the trend actualising.

"In the next 10 years, there would be many heroes and Energy Souls among the humans! Also, the demons would experience internal conflicts among themselves and will go down... This is fate!"

Fang Yuan's thoughts ran wild. If he could go with the flow of the trend, he would benefit from it.

Of course, firstly, he had to occupy the andrias's underwater mansion.

The underwater mansion was a huge cave with a few strong currents of water outside to protect it.

"Hmm... It is a rather good mountain range and the spiritual energy is rather concentrated here. It is a good place for me to stay for a while! The only thing about this place is that the protective currents are a little weak. I'll improve the protection of this place later!"

A black snake was a water snake, and therefore, it was extremely versatile underwater.

After examining the place, Fang Yuan decided to clear the corpse and bones from the mansion before returning to the surface of the river.

"Benefactor?"

Xu Ren had already chased the villagers away and instructed for the constables to stand guard from afar. He was waiting all by himself by the riverbank.

Seeing Fang Yuan emerging from the river, he gave off an anxious look. "How's the Water God?"

"I've killed it! It has sinned too much and deserved it!"

Fang Yuan continued. "I'll prepare to stay here for the time being. Continue on with the plan and have me take over this Water God!"

"Mmm, I know what to do!"

Xu Ren nodded his head.

He had no objections to removing an evil god and replacing it with Fang Yuan.

At least, Fang Yuan would not demand offerings. This point was enough to convince him that Fang Yuan was better than then andriias. Even if people were to question his actions, he could explain himself.

To Fang Yuan, it was beneficial for him to make use of the officials to cover up for the fact that he wanted to snatch the underwater mansion for himself.

"When you return, know your duties. Take good care of the carp in the backyard pond... She owes me something. If I return and she is no longer there, I can only go after you for what she had owed me..."

Fang Yuan laughed and ignored the pale Xu Ren. Turning around, he leapt into the water and disappeared in a splash.

...

In the Golden Court Lake.

Beneath the lake, there was a Dragon Palace.

The dragon palace was extremely big like a giant's country. On the jade square in the centre of the palace, there was a black water dragon!

The water dragon had a horn, 4 limbs and 3 claws on each limb. Its eyes were bloodshot and it had the vibes of a dragon. It was not just a black water dragon, but an evil dragon!

It was the Golden Court Dragon God! A powerful demon from the

heavens! The king of demons! Even the An River Dragon God or the Water God of Qi Lake would have to pay their respects to him.

"Greetings, Dragon God!"

Outside the dragon palace, there was a flash and a tortoise guard escorted a demon in.

The demon stood on its legs and was hairy, with golden fiery eyes and a ferocious look. However, as soon as it saw the evil dragon, it paid its respects.

"Mmm, it's you, monkey!"

The black water dragon opened his eyes, and the monkey demon could feel an immense pressure on him. "What are you here for, Monkey God?"

"Hehe... I am only here because the An River Dragon God had tasked me to send a letter of a wanted fugitive!"

The monkey demon plucked a strand of its hair and blew it, and an image appeared in mid-air. The image of a beautiful lady appeared. If Fang Yuan was here, he would have found her extremely familiar.

"The An River Dragon God must capture this lady!"

The monkey demon chuckled.

"Mm, I will inform those under me about it..."

The black water dragon flicked his claws as though he was asking the monkey to be dismissed.

"Dragon God!"

The monkey demon refused to be dismissed. "I have something else to say!"

"Please carry on!"

"The demons on land feel that you are a little overboard to allow humans to fish in the Golden Court Lake! Although the humans

give you plenty of offerings for many years to come, do you feel anything different in recent years?"

The monkey demons appeared solemn. "The scarcity of resources and energy from the heavens have led to conflicts among us demons... but instead, the humans are thriving and if this continues, I'm afraid..."

"Hmm, I understand!"

However, the Golden Court Dragon God shook his head, as though he felt that the monkey demon was worrying too much.

After the monkey demon had left, he sighed. "Nobody would know the heaven's intentions..."

Chapter 268: Secret Technique

"Long Live the Heizi River God!"

"Please bless us, the compassionate Heizi River God..."

...

Unknowingly, 3 years had passed by in a flash.

At the riverbank of Heizi River, there was a small altar with incense, fruits, flowers, pig's head and goat's head as offerings. After the practice was complete, they would throw it into the river.

After Xu Ren had changed the way of offerings from live offerings to the three basic forms, the Water God surprisingly did not attack humans. Instead, its requests became lesser and lesser, and the villagers felt thankful.

At the same time, the reputation of Xu Ren slowly improved and he was now known for being compassionate.

Under the river, within a spiritual cave in the underwater mountain ridge.

A huge snake appeared to be in hibernation and there were flames floating around it, glittering as the flames flickered, which made the snake looked immortal.

"Hmm?"

Fang Yuan woke up and was astonished. "Did I just hibernate for an entire year?"

Looking at his own body, he was shocked to find out that he had grown from 3 feet to 6 feet long. His scales were now glistening and he looked menacing:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: Black Snake

Essence: 21

Spirit: 21

Magic: 21

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Technique (4th Transformation)], [Water Controlling Technique (Grade 3)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"With the spiritual energy around and the assistance from the Dragon Pearl, my cultivation has indeed shot up. I believe that it's not long before I will become a python!"

A python was a giant snake!

From the Black Snake Transformation to the Python Transformation, it was not hard.

However, since a python would be huge, there would be differences. For instance, a snake would prefer cold while a python would prefer warm and would be naturally strong. If his transformation would be successful, the limitations of a snake would be removed as well.

"And all of these as well..."

Fang Yuan fidgeted and noticed the small flames surrounding him.

Although he remained quiet in his hibernation, after all, he was the Water God of the underwater mansion. The offerings in Heizi River would go to him.

Furthermore, he did not kill or harm anybody, which earned him gratitude from the villagers. With their sincere offerings, Fang Yuan was humoured.

"Hmm, this colourful glow is from the incense. It is best if I don't touch it!"

Fang Yuan opened his spiritual eye and examined before telling them apart. "The outermost layer of golden glow is my people Dao karma, which will allow me to reduce the intensity of people tribulations..."

Thinking about it, he opened his mouth and stretched out his tongue.

The colourful glow did not move. Instead, the outer golden glow was pulled towards him by an invisible force and it condensed into a small golden flower which landed in front of him.

"Go!"

As his spiritual will shook, an unknown world was revealed. As a tremor was felt, the flower of people Dao karma was transferred into his actualised dream world.

"It is indeed possible!"

Seeing this, there was excitement in his eyes.

The rules of reality which governed this realm were too strict and different from his own realm, and there was not much energy he could muster from his actualised dream world.

However, the flower of karma was from the heavens and had no physical shape and content. Therefore, it could be transferred into the actualised dream world for him to take away.

"However... I don't know what the flower could be used for in my own world?"

Fang Yuan sighed. "Based on the rules of reality which governs this realm, with karma comes fortune and good fate. I could just walk out and find a magical weapon lying on the floor, and I can even use it to reduce the intensity of tribulations... However, does the Da Qian world recognise karma from this realm?"

In a thought, he felt that everything did not make sense.

"I should quickly use it up!"

As his spiritual will shook, the golden flower exploded and dissipated within the actualised dream world.

After a golden flash, there seemed to be no changes in the actualised dream world.

"It doesn't seem that useful..."

Fang Yuan was speechless. As he slowly experienced it for himself, he could finally detect it. "It feels as though my actualised dream world is now more responsive? Also... it seems that it is more connected with this realm. If I use up more people Dao karma, I might be able to use my 8 Gates Sword Array here!"

"Could the effect of the people Dao karma allow me to integrate into this world?"

He made a wild guess in his mind. "To test if this is true, I will need to obtain more people Dao karma. In this realm, I'm sure I'm able to!"

He waited until nightfall before leaving and arriving at the Black Lake District government office.

"I can sense the official's energy becoming stronger... It feels much more concentrated here!"

Fang Yuan quickly commented before swiftly entering the government office. The fate energy in the government office was too weak to restrict him.

In the study at the back of the government office.

Xu Ren now had a moustache and appeared more mature, He was reading some books late at night and he frowned, as though he was troubled.

"Sir! Your wife has cooked some bird's nest porridge. Please enjoy and rest early!"

Outside, a beautiful servant served the porridge, which filled the room with its fragrance.

"It's hard on you, Sir!"

Xu Ren was pleased with his wife. After all, she was respectful and even gave birth to a son for him. He took a spoon and started to eat the porridge. "I have just taken over the district government office and will be quite busy, unlike before. Please return and send my regards to my wife, and remind her to rest! Don't wait for me!"

The previous Black Lake district leader had reached the end of his 3-year tenure and had already risen up the ranks to be part of the prefecture. Therefore, Xu Ren had taken up his appointment.

After all, it was only normal for people to be promoted and move a step up.

Of course, this was also due to Xu Ren's hard work.

However, only after taking over the district and control the 100-mile radius land did he realise the difficulty of it.

"There are two main threats in Black Lake District. Firstly, it would be the evil gods and secondly, pirates. As the in-charge of this district, I need to get rid of these in order to live up to my appointment!"

After finishing the porridge, he dismissed the servant and started to reminisce about his younger days and started to clench his fist.

"The pirates are hiding on the Golden Court Lake and their movements are mysterious. They would come together and strike at the same place before retreating back into the lake. Therefore, they are extremely hard to find and I suspect that they have a powerful backing. The previous district leader could only send his soldiers to protect the district's people, but he was unable to wipe out the pirates completely!"

"As for the threat from evil gods, it is harder to deal with. Even I myself can only try my best to support the righteous gods for them to go against the evil gods..."

At this point, he glanced at the pond at the backyard and there

was a mysterious look in his eyes.

He had previously made use of the black snake to get rid of the previous threat from the Heizi River Water God. From then, there were no troubles for the next three years and there was no need for live sacrifices, which was an example which he hoped to emulate.

The golden red carp in his mansion had slowly recovered and could finally be put to use.

Previously, he was a little anxious about the fact that there was a demon living in his backyard.

However, in the past 3 years, the golden red carp did not do anything to threaten them. Instead, it had helped them in the dark and helped them resolve many issues, slowly gaining the family's trust, to the extent that they would trust the golden red carp more than Fang Yuan.

"District leader, an old friend is here to visit!"

With a golden flash, a beautiful lady appeared in his study. It was Li Luan.

"Lady Li, an old friend? Who is it?"

Xu Ren was shocked. It must be somebody powerful for Li Luan to release her Yin Spirit.

"It's me!"

As a black fog spread into the room, a young man in black robes entered.

"It's indeed you, my friend!"

Li Luan took a bow. "It has been 3 years, and I congratulate you for your improvement in cultivation!"

"It's benefactor!"

Xu Ren stood up and bowed.

"How can I compare to you, Lady Li? After all, you are cultivating

in the government's office! After 3 years of cultivation, I have reached a bottleneck and I have to come here!"

Fang Yuan sat down and looked at Xu Ren. "Sir Xu, would your ambitions 3 years ago count today?"

"Of course!"

Xu Ren knew that Fang Yuan wouldn't visit him without a purpose. As soon as he heard him, he promptly agreed.

"Alright! If that is so, I will help you in accomplishing something good for the country!"

Fang Yuan looked down.

"If that is so, I'll send in a letter of approval to recommend you as the god of the district town!"

Xu Ren was overjoyed as he exclaimed.

"Keke... We can discuss this later!"

With a flash, Fang Yuan disappeared. Li Luan quickly followed him.

Within seconds, only Xu Ren was left behind in the study, and all that had happened felt like a dream.

...

"What are you intending to do?"

In a garden at the back of the government office, Fang Yuan sat next to a pond as his tail flicked around on the surface of the water.

A golden red carp swam towards him, Li Luan's voice was heard.

"What do I want to do?"

Fang Yuan laughed as he looked in another direction. It was as though he could see through walls as his eyes were fixed in the master bedroom.

In the bedroom, Wan'er looked like a housewife as she coaxed her

son to sleep.

The child was only 3 years old and was extremely cute. However, it appeared different from a normal human.

It had fate energy of normal levels, but it felt as though it might explode any time, which gave Fang Yuan a sense of familiarity. With the Dragon Pearl in his body, he could detect that the child was not normal, as though he would be the cause of a people tribulation

"You are asking me what I am intending to do. However, I want to ask you. Xu Ren is a normal human. Previously, you can still lie about staying here to recuperate. What excuse do you have now?"

Looking at Li Luan, he continued. "I didn't think that you would have detected the trend in this realm as well and even invested in it... Let me think. What did you do to the child? Hmm... I've received news that the An River Dragon God is looking for a demon fugitive, and it seems that that demon had stolen a treasure from his dragon palace. Could it be the water dragon's Dragon Pearl?"

"You..."

There was a look of shock on Li Luan's face.

Never would she have thought that her discreet actions would be discovered by Fang Yuan so easily.

Fang Yuan chuckled inside.

He had a Dragon Pearl of his own and was of higher quality than the water dragon's Dragon Pearl, which made it extremely easy for him to detect.

"However, the water dragon's Dragon Pearl is a treasure for a demon's cultivation. What use does it have on a human?"

Looking at Li Luan, Fang Yuan interrogated her.

Seeing this, Li Luan could only take in a deep breath and reveal everything. "That day, I was heavily injured. Therefore, I had to

make use of the protection from the Xu Family. However, after seeing the birth of their child and detecting that he was special, I decided to do it!"

"That water dragon's Dragon Pearl is not something that the An River Dragon God would require to survive. Instead, it was a treasure passed on by the previous generations of dragon gods. It is filled with karma and fate energy, and not much dragon properties in it. Through my secret technique, I have planted it into Xu Ting's heart and covered it up..."

Chapter 269: Clear Wind

"You're really ambitious!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his hands together. "This treasure would be able to contain his fate energy. When Xu Ting grows up and becomes accomplished, you want a share of his fate energy and karma? To increase your cultivation?"

"That's right! I must take revenge!"

Li Luan had a determined look on her face, and her Yin Spirit emerged. "Please help me, brother. After all of this is over, I am willing to be your slave to repay your kindness!"

"Forget it..."

Fang Yuan waved his sleeves. "Don't look for me for such a troublesome thing! However, since we have similar goals, we can work together!"

This lady's enemy must be at the same level of the An River Dragon God and Fang Yuan did not want to find trouble for himself.

However, he had to admit that the execution of his plan would be much smoother with her help.

"Of course..."

Li Luan stood up, confused.

The water dragon's Dragon Pearl is an extremely valuable treasure!

Although she had already declared that the pearl had minimal dragon properties in it and that it could not assist Fang Yuan in transforming from a python to a dragon, it could contain fate energy and the benefits were immense.

At the moment where Fang Yuan had exposed her, she had already made plans for the worse. However, she could not believe

it that Fang Yuan had no greed.

However, it was also a good thing that she did not have to fight with her benefactor.

As she heaved a sigh of relief, she continued. "Brother, please swear to the heavens as proof!"

In this realm, the heavens were almighty. Although there might be no response at the moment of swearing, all of it would be accumulated in the tribulation to come and even the Dragon God would have to consider twice before swearing.

"I swear to the heavens that I have no greed over the water dragon's Dragon Pearl. If I break my promise, the heavens can deal with me in any way they like!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes and looked at Li Luan. "Is this enough for you to keep your thunder pill?"

"I'm sorry!"

Li Luan blushed and quickly kept the thunder pill before apologising once more. "I am too cautious..."

"Alright, now can you explain to me where are you from?"

Fang Yuan stared at the golden red carp.

"I am... the daughter of the Water God of Qi Lake!"

Li Luan clenched her teeth but finally revealed her identity.

"What?"

Fang Yuan was in shock at the coincidence in the world. "Alright, you don't have to say anything more..."

He could guess this lady's predicament.

Her father had died and she had sworn to take revenge for him. Therefore, she had infiltrated the palace to steal the treasures.

As for how a water dragon could give birth to a carp? A water dragon was flirtatious in nature and there was no explanation

needed.

However, no matter how good her plan was, she was unlucky. Although the water dragon's Dragon Pearl was a treasure in itself, it was unable to help her transform into a dragon. Following, she was then chased by soldiers and was fortunate enough to be rescued by the Xu Family. After seeing the birth of Xu Ting, only then did she think of harnessing his fate energy for her own cultivation.

"I believe this lady is unaware of my identity..."

Fang Yuan looked at Li Luan. "Could she have suspected anything after seeing my black carp body? That should be a small issue. Against the demons in Qi Lake, we are natural allies!"

...

"Eh? This is..."

At the East of Black Lake District, there was a Dao temple called Clear Wind.

The owner of Clear Wind Temple was rumoured to be a powerful person who worked hard to destroy evil demons and earned a reputation for himself. He was nicknamed 'The Godly Sword of the Sun and Moon'. As he aged, he retired here. He was spot-on in fortune telling and deciphering dreams, which gave him a good business.

Of course, Venerable Clear Wind had good progress in his cultivation in recent years and no longer got himself involved in the happenings around. He had left the work of managing the temple to his few direct disciples while he would cultivate in peace by himself.

"Master!"

At this point in time, within Clear Wind Temple, a young Daoist came to the backyard and was shocked.

His master had unknowingly started to meditate in isolation. As his master looked out towards the district, his face was solemn.

"Is this Tong Ming? You should have mastered your Energy Viewing Technique, so come take a look!"

Venerable Clear Wind was around 80 years old but appeared like a middle-aged man. His face was full of vitality and his black sideburns stretched downwards, giving him the appearance of a respectable Daoist

As he looked towards the government office, his eyes glittered.

"Yes, Master!"

Tong Ming opened his spiritual eye and executed his Energy Viewing Technique towards the government's office. "A red streak of energy is originating from the office like the glow of a fire... The district leader has plenty of people Dao fate energy! Also, there is a colourful scroll within the red streak of energy. This is the scholarly energy! Sir Xu is a scholar and will be able to ensure peace in the district! It is good fortune for the people!"

"Eh?"

After looking for a while longer, his expression changed. "There seems to be a faint black glow coming from the back of the government office. This is the energy of aggressive soldiers. Could the district leader intend to use his soldiers?"

"And then?"

Venerable Clear Wind's expression remained unchanged and continued asking.

"I'm useless and this is all I can see..."

Daoist Tong Ming was sweating profusely.

"You have already mastered half of the Energy Viewing Technique since you were able to see all that you had described...."

Venerable Clear Wind sighed. "Amidst the energy of the

aggressive soldiers, there is the energy of demons! I'm afraid that demons now control the government office and have already disguised themselves to get close to his family members..."

"Demons?"

Daoist Tong Ming shuddered and did not know what to do.
"What should we do?"

"Exterminate it, of course!"

Venerable Clear Wing revealed a murderous look. "Bring my sword to me!"

"Yes, Master!"

Daoist Tong Ming returned to the temple and within seconds, he had retrieved a sword out.

The sword appeared normal and Venerable Clear Wind started to recite his sword formula and exert strength on the handle of the sword.

"Whoosh!"

With the roar of a dragon, a peak of three feet erupted from the ground.

As he glanced at the peak, Daoist Tong Ming started to feel his eyes hurting and could look no more.

He knew that his master had used this magical sword to kill countless demons. With all the spiritual energy in it, it could already become the sword's spirit! Normal people would not be able to wield it and handle that much energy.

Only his master would be able to recite his sword formula and use it at will. Humans and demons alike would be no match for this sword.

"When can I ever get the moon... Oh, Sun Moon Sword, I never thought that I would have to use you again..."

Venerable Clear Wind's face was composed, but his mind was filled with many thoughts:

'It is the only fate for the uprising of humans. We cultivate the authentic way and we are pure humans. Our grandmasters were fortunate to have the opportunity to allow us to enter the realm and help the people Dao...'

'I have disguised myself as a vigilante for over 30 years before realising that something impending would happen, and Black Lake District was one of these places which would be happening. Therefore, I have decided to live in seclusion here and take in a few disciples...'

'Who would've guessed that demons would be involved in this tribulation! Do you demons really think you can share a piece of our fate energy and karma and develop your own Dragon Court? Hehe...'

Although they were after the same thing, he could not allow this to happen.

Even though whatever the demons were doing might be beneficial to the people Dao, only humans should do it. If demons were to accomplish it, they would have a hope of survival! They would also take a share of our karma.

Taking away one's fortune was akin to killing one's parents.

Taking away one's karma and fate energy would reconcile the demons and humans forever!

'Regardless of how the demon knew the trend of the realm or the fact that it might be coincidence, I cannot let it happen and cannot let them have our fate energy!'

Venerable Clear Wind had a cold look on his face.

...

Black Water General's Temple.

The Black Water General was similar to the previous Heizi River God and would frequently demand live sacrifice and would sometimes even go up ashore to feed on humans.

The moon was high up in the night sky.

Suddenly, there was an explosion coming from the temple and the ground shook.

"What happened?"

The awoken temple master draped on his robes and quickly entered the temple. He was left dumbfounded.

"Bang!"

In a loud crash, there was a crack on the neck of the statue of the Black Water General and soon, it broke apart and rolled onto the floor, spinning. Many offerings were smashed.

"General... general!"

Although it was just a statue, it meant that there was an impending disaster for the temple.

"Rumble!"

Suddenly, another loud sound was heard. As the ground exploded, a black fog emerged. Within the black fog, there was a small creature which stretched out its 4 legs. It attempted to run towards the river.

"Don't think about escaping!"

Behind, there was another black glow. A huge black snake appeared and it swiftly blocked the creature's path.

With the second glow, the temple master could no longer take it and fainted.

"Aw! Aw!"

As the giant turtle's path was blocked, it stopped and stretched its head out. With a menacing roar, it shouted. "We are both demons!"

"Why are you troubling me?"

"Just shut up!"

Fang Yuan was too lazy to continue the conversation. With the flick of his tail, several water spears flew out.

"Chi! Chi!"

Not just that, the water spears froze in mid-air, forming icicles and making it stronger.

Ice, made from water but colder than water!

After transforming into a black snake, Fang Yuan's Water Controlling Technique had improved once more and he even learnt to form ice on his own without any master's guidance. As he executed it, the temperature in the surroundings dipped.

"Bang!"

In front of the old turtle, the ground cracked and a wall made of soil emerged.

However, within seconds, the entire soil wall started to freeze up and crumbled in the next instant. The following icicles struck through the shell and into the turtle's flesh.

"Whoosh!"

The old turtle quickly retracted its 4 limbs and head into its shell. As the icicles struck it, it slowly stretched its limbs and head out once more but this time, blood was oozing out.

"Impressive ice-type technique!"

Another flash appeared and Li Luan's Yin Spirit appeared. She appeared shocked. "The chill in the icicles froze any chance of survival for the old tortoise. It is just right, and the control over the chill is impressive!"

"This old turtle is also weak and you have already researched on him. He had few followers, therefore, there would be fewer

implications if we were to kill him..."

Fang Yuan slithered up and struck his tail into the shell.

"Chi! Chi!"

Red streaks of light emerged from the shell and crept up Fang Yuan's scales.

After a while, the flesh of the old turtle disappeared, leaving a shell behind.

Although Fang Yuan was over the phase of eating normal flesh and meat, the demon's flesh was still filled with essence in it. After swallowing the turtle's flesh, he grew a little longer and his scales had a dull red pattern now.

Chapter 270: Imperial Sword

As the bright moon shone, the river gushed downstream.

After the death of the old turtle, its essence was being absorbed by Fang Yuan and all that was left was a turtle shell and a faint glow around it.

"Do you mind?"

Fang Yuan casually glanced at Li Luan. "Do you have the interest to join god dao? If that is so, by all means, take over him. After all, it wouldn't be hard to be appointed by the human dao..."

However, it all boiled down to her own luck if she could be given a title by the heavens as well.

"Talking about following god dao, you have already controlled Heizi River for three years. Why are there no improvements in your cultivation?"

Li Luan bit her lip and smiled. "We have different goals so there's no meaning in this conversation!"

"That's true..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head but was secretly shocked.

He knew that if he were to benefit from Xu Ting by taking in his karma, he might get himself involved in the impending tribulation. This was why he chose to live in seclusion and only took control over the spiritual mountain range underwater.

Since Li Luan was clueless about the impending tribulation, her actions of trying to make use of Xu Ting to help the people Dao was only reasonable.

'There could be a possibility that this woman might be involved in the impending tribulation!'

Fang Yuan examined Li Luan.

Based on his definition of 'involved', he meant that she would be the epicentre of the tribulation.

After all, his actions were already affected by her...

"The moon..."

Li Luan looked up and commented softly.

At that moment, Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit became tensed up.

Under the moonlight, he could feel a sense of danger.

"Quickly retreat!"

Within seconds, he quickly arched his back and leapt into the river as quick as lightning.

Within seconds, he could see a shimmer in his eyes.

The silhouette of a sword landed under the moonlight.

This sword was glittering as though it was as bright as the moon. It struck down with a murderous vibe.

The sword hesitated for a moment as it detected Fang Yuan escaping the vicinity. In a split second, it decided to change its target and went for Li Luan instead.

"This is a flying sword technique! A flying sword controlled by someone!"

The flying sword became a streak of light as it struck down and suddenly, Fang Yuan recalled a sentence from a poem - 'As beautiful as the moon, the enchantress takes her leave!'

"If I don't help her, she'll be dead!"

His spiritual will shook as 3 ice pillars emerged from the ground, shielding her.

"Whoosh!"

The sword essence exploded, destroying the 3 pillars of ice and shattering it.

It was this extra split second which gave Li Luan the opportunity to use her lifeline.

"Thunder Pill, explode!!!"

A green streak of electricity ruptured and struck onto the sword essence.

"A thunder-type technique indeed!"

As the power of the thunder pill was revealed, Fang Yuan could feel his scales standing on its ends.

The God of Thunder was considered one of the strongest gods. Therefore, thunder-type techniques were one of the more powerful techniques.

Although this thunder was not a tribulation, the destruction that it had caused was only a little lesser than a natural tribulation!

"Clang!"

After a clang, the sword essence disintegrated, revealing an ancient-looking sword. It was three feet long and there was a string of cherries on the handle, drifting through the wind.

"Ah... thunder technique!"

A spiritual will emerged from the sword. Within seconds, the flying sword turned around and flew off quickly, shaking in the wind.

"Brother, are you alright?"

Fang Yuan slithered back ashore and checked on her.

"Thanks for your assistance! Otherwise, I wouldn't even have the chance to activate the thunder pill!"

Li Luan held her chest, worried.

She had the feeling of coming back from the dead!

If her Yin Spirit was killed, she would have ended up as a vegetable even though she still had her physical body.

"This person is powerful! He should be a warrior among the people!"

Fang Yuan glanced at Li Luan. "Have you not realised anything after staying at the Xu Family? I'm surprised that you haven't been killed!"

Li Luan rolled her eyes. "I was panicky throughout my stay in their mansion and have kept my demonic energy for the past three years. Do you think I'm like you? You don't even conceal yourself when walking out in the streets! It must be your actions and negligence which attracted this highly skilled warrior!"

Fang Yuan was taken aback.

His intention in killing the evil gods was to let Xu Ren submit an official appeal to the prefecture to get rid of the evil gods.

Although the officials could not absorb and harness spiritual energy around them, they could gather the fate energy of the people Dao which would be troublesome for Fang Yuan.

However, the officials from the prefecture could render the fate energy of the evil gods useless.

Never would he have thought that such an ordinary action taken by Xu Ren would attract so much attention.

"Forget it... I want to see who this powerful human is!"

Fang Yuan revealed a courageous look. "I'm going to look for that human! Do you want to follow me?"

"This... I wouldn't dare to disobey!"

Li Luan clenched her teeth. Looking at the direction which the sword flew towards, there was a vengeful look on her face.

After all, she was a demon! It was already rare that she, as a demon, did not take advantage of the humans! How could she allow another human to take advantage of her?

...

Within Clear Wind Temple.

Venerable Clear Wind crossed his legs and sat on a platform. As he recited his mantra, his body remained still.

Beside him, there were a few loyal disciples protecting him.

"Buzz!"

A streak of sword-reflected light entered from outside and landed in front of Venerable Clear Wind.

On the sword, a small Yin Spirit emerged. It had the looks of Venerable Clear Wind and hurriedly, it leapt into Venerable Clear Wind's physical body.

"Buzz! Buzz!"

In a glow, the physical body of Venerable Clear Wind stood up. As he opened his eyes, his face became flushed and he hastily spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Master?!"

The surrounding disciples were in a shock.

They knew that their master's flying sword technique would require his Yin Spirit to possess the sword and this would allow the sword to be able to fly 10 over miles and strike whenever and wherever he wanted!

Since the Yin Spirit would have the protection of the spiritual sword, it was extremely safe.

However, it seemed that their attempt at assassination had failed and even the Yin Spirit had experienced backlash!

"Cough! Cough! The two demons are extremely powerful! Quickly bring me my Heavenly King Revival Pill!"

Venerable Clear Wind spat out a few more mouthfuls of fresh blood and his face was extremely pale. He was struggling to instruct his fellow disciples.

One of his disciples had already prepared the spiritual pills and served them to Venerable Clear Wind. After a while, he seemed to have recovered a little. "Tong Feng, Tong Huo, quickly set up the array... A strong enemy is coming!"

Looking at the disciples he had in the temple, running away would not be a good choice as they would surely be hunted down. By then, all of them would die.

The only thing he could do was to take advantage of their geographical location and defend with all their lives.

"Yes, Master!"

Two of his disciples quickly rushed around the temple. Within minutes, there was a stream of air circulating around the temple, protecting it. Above the temple, there was a layer of fog rising up, concealing the entire temple.

After a short while, two streaks of fog landed next to the temple. It was Fang Yuan and Li Luan.

"They're feeling guilty! This only goes to show that they were the ones who attacked us!"

Fang Yuan glanced at Li Luan.

Li Luan blushed. She was still doubting his tracking abilities but now, she was proven otherwise.

"We should be fighting now right? Hold on, we have to announce our arrival..."

Fang Yuan slowly slithered forward and shouted with a commanding voice. "Listen up you brats! Since you dare to attack us, you must be prepared for our revenge. I'll give you all how long it takes for an incense to completely burn for all of you to come out and surrender. If not, I shall burn this temple and leave nothing behind!"

"How dare you!"

They could no longer hold it in. A voice travelled from inside the temple. "You evil demons live among us humans and are even forcing the district leader to take your orders! We're helping the heavens by killing the both of you!"

'You must be powerful to have the guts to rebut... You can even convince me that your ambush on us is reasonable! Seriously?'

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes and prepared to break the array.

"Master... That demon is preparing to enter the array!"

Within the array, a few disciples were extremely nervous.

"Relax! How would such a stupid animal understand the philosophies of the array?"

Venerable Clear Wind appeared contented. "It would take an extremely powerful demon to break this array using brute force... what is this!!!!"

He was originally composed but now, his hands were shivering.

His eyes were wide opened and his mouth was gaping as he was trying to comprehend what was happening before him.

In front of him, the black snake had entered the array. It was slithering to the east, followed by the west. It was looking for all the weak points in the array and using its own technique to destroy them.

"Rumble!"

As the array was destroyed, what was left behind was Venerable Clear Wind and his few disciples.

"How is this possible? This is a secret array passed down to us by our ancestors!"

Venerable Clear Wind was dumbfounded. He wielded his sword and walked up. "Demon, how did you break this array?"

'Eh... I'm not going to waste my time talking to you!'

Fang Yuan kept mum and observed Venerable Clear Wind's fate energy.

Because of Venerable Clear Wind's cultivation, he was able to conceal his own fate energy. However, Fang Yuan's cultivation was stronger and therefore, he could still see through Venerable Clear Wind's concealment.

"His martial arts are rather good. Of course, the interesting part is the additional energy surrounding him, which is the fate energy passed down to him from his ancestors... Furthermore, looking at the situation, it seems that he has gained protection from the heavens... It's a pity that he is too stubborn... We are all helping the people Dao, so why does he want to fight with me?"

Looking at the cold look in Venerable Clear Wind's eyes, Fang Yuan knew that he was a stubborn person. Therefore, he quickly came to a decision. "I'll kill him! Who cares if he has the protection of the heavens? I couldn't possibly let him kill me if he wanted to, right? As for going against the trend of the world, there will surely be some tribulations afterwards. Even if I cannot use my karma to reduce the intensity of the tribulations, I must still kill him today!"

He transformed into a sharp arrow and flung himself forward.

"Watch out for my sword!"

Although Venerable Clear Wind's Yin Spirit was injured and was unable to wield his sword, his true self could still do it. With his first strike, he could perfectly defend his physical body at the same time.

"What a good strike!"

Fang Yuan flicked his tail, avoided the sword and struck on the blade of the sword.

"Ah!"

Venerable Clear Wind retreated. There was fear in his voice.

How could a snake know martial arts?

Chapter 271: Slaying Evil

There was no room for error in a fight among the highly-skilled!

With just a simple oversight, Venerable Clear Wind was disarmed of his long sword as a black flash shot through his chest.

"Pu!"

His physical body crumbled as though the essence of his body was being sucked out. Instantly, he had become a dried corpse which fell to the ground and shattered.

"Ah... You're too extreme!"

A black fog rose from the head of the corpse as a Yin Spirit appeared.

This was the spirit of Venerable Clear Wind. If it were to escape, it could find other suitable bodies and live on, or it could reincarnate into a new body. The possibilities were endless.

As it glanced fiercely at Fang Yuan, the Yin Spirit waved its hands in an attempt to enter the sword and escape.

"Don't think about running!"

Li Luan walked up and stretched her hands out. Immediately, a big red net appeared which contained the spiritual sword within.

Considering her abilities and cultivation, it was theoretically impossible for her to contain the spiritual sword. However, the sword was previously damaged by the thunder and lighting which she had summoned and had yet to be combined with Venerable Clear Wind's spirit. With the advantage, she made full use of it. Although the sword was trying its best to penetrate its way through, but to no avail.

"This is your fate!"

A huge hand made out of black fog appeared above Fang Yuan's head, which quickly struck towards the spirit of Venerable Clear

Wind.

The spirit of Venerable Clear Wind was attempting to resist but as the black fog hand thickened, it became dizzy and restrained.

"Master..."

Only now did Venerable Clear Wind's disciples became aware of the entire situation. With a look of shock on their faces, a few of them attempted to rescue their master but the rest were at loss and were thinking about how to escape.

"You cannot kill me... I am the disciple of Xuan Zhen Sect, an authentic sect in the world! If you kill me, you will be in trouble!"

Venerable Clear Wind's spirit was struggling. "It was my fault that I had attacked you. Isn't it enough that you have destroyed my physical body?"

"... You are aiding the district leader and therefore are a good demon. If you don't mind, we can join forces and no one in Black Lake District can be our match!"

This person had a glib tongue. As he spoke, even Li Luan couldn't help but started to think about his offer.

After all, he made sense.

Regardless if he was from a sect, or in terms of karma or even just laying out the pros and cons, it was not worth it to kill this person.

"Die!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as his black hand crushed the spirit.

With a shriek, the spirit disintegrated. This was the real destruction of the spirit that was irreversible.

"Ah... Master?"

A few Daoists were in shock. "How dare you kill master?"

"Who cares about what he was trying to say! The fact was that he had attempted to kill me and even guarded against me. How can I

be fooled by him?"

Fang Yuan snickered.

Although Venerable Clear Wind's offer seemed like a win-win, it might bring trouble for Fang Yuan.

The most important thing was that Venerable Clear Wind had a backing and could always call for help. On the other hand, Fang Yuan was alone. Therefore, he had fewer rights to speak up for himself and this would only spell trouble.

This was why he had to destroy him completely!

"Pu! Pu!"

After a few black flashes, every Daoist in the vicinity held their chests and fell to the ground as blood seeped out of their wounds.

"Brother... why are you so extreme?"

Seeing this, Li Luan gave a look of discomfort.

"This is not my choice. The moment that sword tried to harm us, there was no turning back..."

Fang Yuan revealed his Yin Spirit and looked depressed.

Looking at his own fate energy, Fang Yuan chuckled. He could see the little flames around him as usual. In fact, he had restored his people Dao karma.

Instead of being reduced, it had increased!

'Humans will rise and the demons will fall. After killing this person, I would be against the trend of this realm. How could this not be detected? This would only mean one thing. The heavens are confusing me! Although my karma seems normal, they are preparing for an extreme tribulation for me! If I do not be on my guard at all times, I would get myself into trouble!'

The Energy Viewing Technique and the likes of it seemed to have originated from his realm. Therefore, this realm could manipulate

such energy-viewing related techniques and make it seem normal!

Although people might see that he was full of auspicious energy, his enemies would see him as extremely troubled and would strike after seeing it!

"Since I've killed him, I might as well kill the rest!"

Indeed, Li Luan felt nothing about killing the other Daoist

After all, she was not human to begin with. Seeing the death of the many daoist was akin to the death of ants. After a sigh, she quickly got over it.

"This person belongs to a sect. Therefore, it is a good idea to wipe all of them out completely so no one would be able to report what had happened here!"

They were thinking about how to clear the mess that they had made.

After an intensive clearing session in the temple, they managed to find some loots.

"Keke... These daoist are rich indeed!"

In the small courtyard, they could already find a few treasures.

There was gold, silver, pearls and their total worth seemed to be a few thousand taels. All of these were the contributions from the district people.

Other than these, they also had countless bottles. These were the spiritual pills made personally by Venerable Clear Wind, of which Li Luan had looted quite a number of them.

It was a fact that in terms of alchemy and casting arrays, the demons were less-developed in these areas compared to humans. They were even more incomparable in other tedious processes.

"Keke..."

Seeing this, Fang Yuan smiled. "You can have the spiritual pills if

you want. Just leave me the herbs!"

He walked up calmly and with the strength of his Yin Spirit, he picked up the Sun Moon Sword.

Although it had been damaged by the lighting and thunder and had lost its owner, it remained sharp and lethal.

"It's a good sword!"

He heaved a sigh. "I'm afraid all the spiritual pills and treasures cannot compare to this sword!"

It was not an easy feat to smelt a spiritual sword like this.

Just the materials required to smelt the sword would require gold, silver, jade shavings and iron forged from the stars. After smelting it, it would require a cultivator to use spiritual force to refine and polish it for many years. Furthermore, the sword would require cleansing periodically using lotus essence and ginseng soup to maintain its spiritual property, and the consumption of the sword was insane.

There was a saying among the people in this realm. The poor would study and become scholars while the rich would learn martial arts and make a name for themselves through cultivation. It was extremely true.

"Since history, treasured swords should always go with heroes. This sword fits you to a tee, Brother Fang!"

Li Luan knew that she did had less than Fang Yuan in taking down Venerable Clear Wind and therefore did not fight with him for the prize.

"Sounds good!"

Fang Yuan looked up. "Let's shift all these away and burn the entire temple down! Remember, don't let anyone know what happened here today, not even Xu Ren! We were only killing an evil god today and none of this is related to us!"

"I know what to do!"

Although she did not know why Fang Yuan wouldn't let her ask Xu Ren for help in clearing up the place, Li Luan still agreed.

...

Within a spiritual cave in Heizi River.

Fang Yuan sat within and released his Yin Spirit. As he opened his spiritual eye, he snickered. "The tribulation is coming! I need to strengthen myself!"

If he could see signs the impending arrival of a tribulation in his fate energy, he would be less worried. After all, he could use his karma to reduce the intensity of the tribulation.

However, there were no traces or signs of anything happening. This was the most dangerous as the tribulation might strike anytime to take his life and he would not have any time to prepare!

"Although the heavens are hiding the signs of tribulation from me, I can still roughly guess. The weakening of my fate energy would mean that a tribulation is coming. However, I am rather powerful now. If the heavens want to take my life, they can only do it in two ways..."

Fang Yuan was deep in thought.

If he was a human, say an official, he would be likely to plead guilty and be stripped of his appointment before a punishment would be meted out.

However, he was a demon and all these were useless on him. Therefore, there were only a few methods in which the tribulation could strike him.

"Only a direct Killer Tribulation can deal with me. As of now, there are two ways it can come. Firstly, it can come from the Xuan Zhen Sect, the sect which Venerable Clear Wind came from! Although I have killed everybody there and cleared all traces, the

cultivators might be able to guess and calculate the happenings. If they are powerful enough, they might just find out something!"

Secondly, the tribulation can come in the form of a more powerful demon god! After all, I have been destroying temples in Black Lake District and my traces are obvious. How could there be no backlash against me?"

After analysing all the possible outcomes, Fang Yuan chuckled.

There was nothing he could do to survive the tribulation but strengthen himself!

As he sighed, he spat out a long sword which appeared translucent. It was the Sun Moon Sword.

"When can I ever get the moon?"

Reading the inscription on the sword, he sighed once more. "For me to use it, I have to smelt it again!"

He was already mentally prepared from the moment he had decided to take the sword.

"Go!"

As his spiritual will shook, 49 bone pearls shot out.

This was the property of the evil god, the andrias. The spirits of the vengeful souls were freed, but the hatred and aggressiveness of the spirits remained in the pearls.

"Bang! Bang!"

As the bone pearls exploded, a white powder landed on the Sun Moon Sword and a black mist seeped into the sword at the same time.

"With this spiritual material, I can smelt the sword again and therefore remove traces of Venerable Clear Wind from the sword. Although the sword would no longer be able to fly, I can still make use of its sharpness!"

Fang Yuan was inexperienced in smelting swords. However, he was only doing a touch up on the Sun Moon Sword. Furthermore, he had experience in dealing with his very own 8 Gates Sword Array and could still do it.

With a shriek, an immense amount of demonic force was released and wrapped the sword within.

As the bone pearls exploded and fused together with the sword, the original spiritual sword was now a pale bone-white and appeared sinister...

In a flash, 7 days had gone by.

"Come back!"

As Fang Yuan retracted the demonic force, a snow-white sword was revealed!

The sword released vibes that made it both good and evil as though it was smelted from bones. As it released a demonic glow from the blade, a black mist was spinning around the sword.

"White Bone Evil Slaying Sword! This is a combination of the spiritual sword that killed many evil demons and the vengeance of 49 young spirits. It will be extremely effective against demons and ghosts!"

Fang Yuan released his Yin Spirit and imprinted his own spiritual will on the sword.

After another round of smelting, the original resistance which was felt from the Sun Moon Sword had disappeared. In a mouth, Fang Yuan had swallowed the entire sword.

"Alright, it's time to test it out!"

There was a look of determination in his eyes. "Go!"

"Whoosh!"

Within his body, the White Bone Evil Slaying Sword shot out a flash which struck on the Dragon Pearl in his body.

"Wuuu..."

Fang Yuan's body shook as though he has sustained internal injuries. Within seconds, there was a bright golden glow.

In his spiritual will, the Dragon Pearl shook as well. A silhouette of a green dragon appeared as bits of gold fell from the sky.

"Smelt!"

Although it was only something insignificant, Fang Yuan's body started to expand as though he had eaten too much. He quickly closed his eyes and started to enter a state of deep cultivation.

Chapter 272: Human Tribulation

In the district city, in front of the Black Water General's Temple.

"This is an order from the District Leader. Since this god required live sacrifice, it is an evil one. The destruction of its own statue is a sign from the heavens that it is being punished. Don't be alarmed by this!"

Two government servants raised gongs and shouted at the top of their lungs as they explained what had happened in the temple to the residents.

After a seal was pasted on the doors of the temple, a print of the district leader was imprinted, forming a seal.

In reality, such a weak seal would do nothing to trap the original Black Water Old Turtle. But now, it was enough to trap its weak spirit.

"This is creepy. In just one night, so many Water Gods have been killed..."

"Not just that, even the Clear Wind Temple has been reduced to ashes. Could there be a powerful demon passing by our district, hence causing all these?"

"Since Venerable Clear Wind is well-known for killing demons, he might be the one who had exterminated all these evil Water Gods and might be injured himself as well..."

He sighed.

"Shhh, don't talk so much. Do you still want to live?"

After sighing, he was being pulled by the people behind as they covered his mouth.

"Jerk!"

The government servant who was making the announcement became angry. With a whip, he whipped the ground with a loud

crackle. "The Clear Wind Temple has not been maintained well and therefore was a fire hazard. Don't spout nonsense!"

There were lives involved!

If they were to admit that it was a murder case and they could not investigate and find out who the murderer was, it would look bad on the district leader.

Furthermore, Xu Ren had also suspected that it might be Fang Yuan's 'mishandling'. Since there was no one who had hatred towards the temple, they could just let things settle as such.

In the government office, it was always good to avoid trouble. Therefore, the government servant glared at the person who made the comment.

"Don't put it to heart! My brother is retarded..."

The few of them quickly pulled the person out and left.

It might be a casual comment, but there might be serious complications that come with it.

"Venerable Clear Wind?"

A skinny person among the crowd was curious and decided to take a look at the temple.

However, everything was reduced to ashes and around the temple, there were a few incense and crying sounds.

This scene had left him in shock. "Could it be really the doings of a demon and that Venerable was being killed by a demon like how he killed demons?"

As he left the city, he arrived in the wilderness. There was a yellow glow on his body as his actual physical body was revealed. It was a huge horse monkey wearing clothes.

The horse monkey revealed his teeth which resembled that of a dog. With a murderous look, he picked up an incense and prayed respectfully. "Grandmaster, I have investigated. It is indeed true

that there are a series of demons being killed. As of now, 7 of them had died and the other remaining are fearful... Furthermore, Clear Wind Temple within the city has been burnt down completely and everybody in the temple, from the temple owner to the Daoist children, died..."

He knew that Venerable Clear Wind had an extremely high cultivation and it was a joke that he would be burnt alive in the temple. "This is fishy. Should I continue my investigation?"

"There's no need!"

In a fog, a human appeared. It was the monkey demon which had visited the dragon palace before. "I already have news that it is the doing of a black snake demon who had snatched a cave from the previous Heizi River God 3 years ago. Quickly go and kill it!"

"This..."

The horse monkey scratched his ears, conflicted. "The Water Gods in Golden Lake Prefecture are officially under the jurisdiction of the Golden Court Dragon God. If I do this, it seems rather inappropriate... Furthermore, if that black snake demon is able to kill 7 gods, it must be rather powerful. I'm afraid I am not skilled enough to kill him..."

"Hmph, the old Dragon God is already an old fogey and does not seem to care about this. If he doesn't take any action, as the monkey god, leader of demons on the land, we should help him do his job. As for the black snake demon, it has been assisting the humans but is becoming crazy. Come over here. I will give you three strands of hair. You can use them to kill that demon!"

The imagery of the monkey god plucked out three hairs from itself and blew at them. In a flash, the three strands of hair went through and arrived at the chest of the horse monkey.

"I will accede to your order!"

The horse monkey smiled, figured out the direction to Heizi river

and walked towards it.

...

"River God, please bless us with a bountiful harvest!"

"We, your followers, pray for good weather!"

...

Next to Heizi River, there was already a small temple built there.

This was built out of gratitude from the villagers as Fang Yuan had given them less pressure since his arrival.

They had offered him the appointment of 'Black Dragon General'. Never would he have thought that Xu Ren could receive an approval for a title for Fang Yuan, which made him speechless.

"Who would've guessed that such a small river would attract so many offerings! The prosperity of the human race is much more than the monkeys of our race living in the mountains..."

As the horse monkey witnessed the offerings, he felt a little jealous. With a chuckle, he rolled on the floor and revealed his true body. It was an aggressive monkey covered in black fur. The aggressive monkey raised its fist and smashed the altar in the temple.

"Rumble!"

Amidst the tremor, the altar crumbled and a few people who were unable to run away in time were injured and started to bleed. They were crying for help.

"De... Demon!"

"The demon that eats humans are here!"

The villagers rushed out and wished that they had another pair of legs to help them run faster.

"Eh, what happened?"

The aggressive monkey looked at his own fists and was confused.

This was too simple!

Don't these gods prioritise these offerings? Why would they allow him to destroy them effortlessly?

"Are you finally here?"

In the river within the mud, a pair of eyes appeared.

Fang Yuan did not believe in incense and offerings to begin with. He had left the temple there to act as a bait and an element of confusion.

Suddenly, a water reflective technique appeared, which revealed the monkey.

"A monkey demon? I should be able to deal with it with my current cultivation..."

After smelting the spiritual sword, Fang Yuan had left his cave and had hidden beneath the water just to wait for this day!

"I cannot hide from the tribulations from heavens. If I avoid it this time, a stronger one would come next time. I need to go through it... After this tribulation, I should continue helping the people Dao and follow the trend of this realm so I won't get myself into any more trouble!"

Fang Yuan waited quietly. He witnessed the monkey destroying his temple, becoming enraged and finally, the monkey started to eat humans... After ensuring that there was no other ambush in the surroundings, he revealed himself.

"This demon is aggressive and has a strong demonic strength. Also, the three golden furs behind its head seem insignificant but it might be his secret weapon! I cannot let my guard down!"

At this point in time, he started to swim towards the shore. The waves from the Haizi River crashed onto the riverbank and became dark in colour.

"I've caught you!"

As the monkey exclaimed, he rushed mindlessly towards the riverbank.

Covered by mist, a huge array formed and sealed the monkey within four walls.

"Eh? Is this... an array?"

The monkey was shocked as he regained his composure.

However, a black fog emerged from the mist; it was extremely thick and appeared strong.

"Bang!"

The monkey wailed as he was being hit by the black fog. Dumbfounded, he glanced at the black shadow in front of him, which was about 30 feet in height.

In front of his enemy, his height of 10 feet seemed like a joke.

Indeed, a silhouette of a snake appeared. However, the snake appeared extraordinary and was as long as 30 feet! It was as thick as a water bucket and its head was as huge as a water vat. Under its cold stare, the monkey demon could feel a sense of cruelty.

'How is this a black snake? It is a black python!'

Feeling that his enemy was as strong as himself, the aggressive monkey became depressed.

In front of him was a black python who had achieved the 5th Transformation with the help of the Dragon Pearl!

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: Python

Essence: 24

Spirit: 24

Magic: 24

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Technique (5th Transformation)], [Water Controlling Technique (Grade 4)], [Natural Magical Strength (Grade 1)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

...

Against such a powerful Fang Yuan, the aggressive monkey felt a chill in his spine, as though he was against a godly demon. This was due to the increment in Fang Yuan's dragon properties.

He was not any normal python, but a dragon python!

"Python Wrapping Technique, Kill!"

As the black silhouette shook, Fang Yuan's tail curled and trapped the aggressive monkey, constricting him.

This was the killer move of a python and was indeed scary when Fang Yuan executed it.

No matter how strong the aggressive monkey was, with the constriction, there were cracking sounds from its body. It shrieked continuously but as it was restrained, it could not move a single bit. The only thing it could do was to wait for its impending death.

"Grandmaster, save me!"

As he was about to die, he suddenly thought of his grandmaster and screamed for help.

"Whoosh!"

From the back of his head, one golden hair started to glow and heat him, creating an immense force which repelled the python.

"Chi!"

Another hair transformed into a long golden sword and flew towards Fang Yuan.

"No one can save you today!"

Fang Yuan opened his snake mouth and a white glow shot out. It was the White Bone Evil Slaying Sword!

"Clang!"

Both swords clashed with each other in mid-air and the golden sword broke in half. Without hesitation, the white bone sword continued to strike towards the monkey.

"No..."

As the monkey screamed, the third hair exploded. However, nothing happened. Instead, a streak of light shot up into the sky.

"Trap!"

Fang Yuan focused and activated the array.

"Chi!"

However, the streak of light was extremely quick and even the clouds were repelled. In a moment, the trap array was broken apart as the streak of light disappeared into the sky.

"Who would've thought that my array would be... unable to contain it. Two strands of hair were able to defend from two of my strikes! This is indeed a powerful demon!"

Fang Yuan's eyebrows twitched. As the sword landed down, it ended the monkey's life.

"We have already become enemies. How can I not kill him?"

As he shook his head, he shivered.

He could feel that something was wrong and quickly opened his spiritual eye to check on his own body.

All of his fate energy was completely gone. There was an intense golden glow which transformed into 7 small golden flowers arranged nicely and floating in space.

"Is the tribulation over?"

Fang Yuan was sceptical. As he looked around, he could see a

streak of black fog flying around him. However, it did not seem hostile. Fang Yuan was confused.

"I have worked hard to kill evil gods and have stood firm on the side of the humans. Although there is a backlash from killing Venerable Clear Wind, I have tided over the tribulation and I am ultimately still protected by the people Dao..."

"Following which, even if there are implications to come, they would be harmless! However, this is not what I want!"

Chapter 273: Giant Venomous Snake

Canger Mountain.

It was a huge mountain within the Golden Lake Prefecture, and there were many dangers lurking within.

However, at the centre of the mountain, there was a scene of serenity.

Spiritual water flowed everywhere and flowers were blooming. A group of monkey demons were playing around and as they ran into the forest, they were catching fleas from each other.

In the middle, there was a black peak. It was barren and extended straight up towards the sky. There was a circle of dark clouds surrounding the peak, which struck fear in those who set eyes on the peak.

As a golden streak of light flew into the mountain, there was an exclamation from the peak of the mountain. "What audacity, python demon! How dare you kill my grandson! I will peel your skin alive to let out my hatred for you!"

On the peak, within a cave, the monkey god's golden eyes were flaming. The other female monkeys in the cave could not avoid as they scrambled. "How dare you! How dare you! I'll kill you!"

As he stood up, the entire mountain shook.

"Monkey King, wait up!"

Another streak of light entered the cave, which then transfigured into a tortoise guard. "My god invites you to gather at the Golden Court Lake for a discussion about the demons!"

"The dragon god invited me?"

The monkey god froze and composed himself. 'I must be in my physical body to meet the dragon god. Otherwise, it would be extremely disrespectful! Indeed, a small monkey is nothing

compared to the demons. However... I cannot contain my anger!"

As he struck his fist out, there was a golden glow and a secret path revealed itself within the cave. A golden-haired monkey walked out with a serious look.

"Although the python is powerful, I believe my incarnation will be able to kill it!"

The monkey god smashed towards his forehead. Immediately, a black fog appeared which entered the golden-haired monkey's body.

The golden-haired monkey became ferocious in an instant as it walked towards the opening of the cave.

"Tortoise guard, I'm sorry for the wait. Let's meet the Dragon God now!"

As the monkey god turned around, he cheerfully exclaimed.

"That's good!"

...

At the same time, within the government's office.

Due to the fact that his physical body was extremely obvious, Fang Yuan could only send his Yin Spirit to look for Xu Ren.

Otherwise, he would have destroyed the entire office if he were to come in person.

After attaining the 5th Transformation, this magical energy increased exponentially and the Yin Spirit which he formed would be able to walk under normal daylight, had flesh and was no different from a normal human.

"Greetings, god!"

In the small study, there was only Xu Ren and Li Luan.

Li Luan looked at Fang Yuan with an expression of shock. It was only a matter of days, but Fang Yuan's spiritual aura had

strengthened by folds. To her, Fang Yuan was becoming increasingly mysterious and her sense of insecurity intensified.

"There was a powerful demon which intruded out district, but I have killed it!"

Fang Yuan ignored Li Luan's thoughts and spoke his mind.

"What? A powerful demon?"

Xu Ren shuddered. Although he had cultivated for many years, he still turned pale.

"Mmm. Our district has been actively clearing the evil gods and our movements are too obvious. This is only normal... After all, I've killed it... We can just take our leave anytime, but what can you do, district leader?"

Fang Yuan was determined but as he spoke, he remained expressionless.

"Since this is the case, I shall face whatever that comes!"

Xu Ren gritted his teeth and bowed towards both Li Luan and Fang Yuan. "Please take good care of my wife and my child if anything happens to me!"

"Things have not escalated to such a stage yet!"

Fang Yuan shook his head. "Do you know why the popular righteous gods like Goddess Xiang Fei and Golden Dragon General are alright with our doings?"

These were righteous gods. Although they were once demons, they had already lost the evil side in them and would no longer request for live sacrifices.

"Rumble!"

As soon as he spoke, dark clouds formed above and thunder roared.

"This is because the demons have split! Those clever ones would

choose to be righteous gods! However, the majority of them would be tempted by the offerings from humans and had already taken the offerings for. This is especially so for those demons which only exist in spirit form. They cannot resist anything!"

Fang Yuan rattled out the trend of the realm without much consideration.

"Kacha!"

As soon as he finished his sentence, a streak of lightning struck across and Li Luan became pale. She fell to the ground as though she could not take it any longer.

'Indeed enraged, but useless!'

Fang Yuan smiled to himself as his spirit remained resolute and unafraid.

After all, he was in the government office, a creation of the people Dao. He was also standing next to Xu Ren, who was an official and therefore would have the protection from him. Additionally, there was another important factor in the government office: Xu Ting!

Lightning could never strike here!

"The demons have split? Some of the demons are helping the humans?"

After hearing this, Xu Ren shuddered. "What do you mean?"

"You can directly request from the prefecture to get the authority to clear all the evil gods before obtaining approval to officially help the righteous gods...."

Fang Yuan smiled.

This was forcing the demons to take a side! Those who would support the humans would be protected given assistance to deal with the evil demons!

'Let me be the one to cause the chaos in this world!'

A thought appeared in his mind.

No risks, no rewards!

To gain the most out of this realm, he had to take risks!

"I understand now... No wonder the both of you are willing to help me! It seems that you two are the brave ones among the demons!"

There was a glitter in Xu Ren's eyes as his face became flushed with excitement. "Could there really be an uprising among the humans?"

"Brother, why do you want to do this?"

Suddenly, there was a voice at Fang Yuan's ears; it was Li Luan.

She gave a complicated expression as she glared at Fang Yuan.

"Why do we want to betray the demons? This is merely following the trend of the heavens... Furthermore, don't you think your actions in the Xu Mansion are more overboard than mine?"

Fang Yuan replied her using the same technique.

Li Luan was stunned. As she thought about how she inserted the water dragon's Dragon Pearl into Xu Ting, she started to break into cold sweat.

"Don't worry. Although we would have started the Killer Tribulation, we will still be involved in in the future. However, there are many advantages to make the first move... Perhaps, you can ride the wave and take your revenge before everything is destroyed!"

As he comforted Li Luan, he gave Xu Ren a few pieces of advice for him to be prepared. However, in reality, he was just convincing Xu Ren to ensure his own son's survival. As Fang Yuan's Yin Spirit left the government office, he smiled to himself as he looked at the clear skies.

'Everything would boil down to this!'

His Yin Spirit quickly returned to his physical body. Slowly, he opened his spiritual eye and waited.

On his head, there were 7 golden flowers arranged nicely, spinning about in mid-air. As they spun, they released a warm golden glow.

"Rumble!"

At this moment, his forehead shook. He knew that was undergoing some sort of transformation.

A green glow descended from the heavens and landed on the golden flowers.

"The heavens are showing their appreciation! I'm sure of it!"

Seeing this, Fang Yuan felt relieved and overjoyed at the same time. "Is this heavenly karma?"

If one helped the people Dao, they would gain people Dao karma. If one followed the trend of the heaven, they would gain heavenly karma!

Although this was the first time he had witnessed it with his own eyes, he was sure of it.

"People Dao karma is gold in colour and can bring fortune and reduce the intensity of people tribulation! How about heavenly karma?"

He opened up his actualised dream world and absorbed the green energy.

At the moment where the green energy was leaving the realm and entering the actualised dream world, something happened! The original green colour returned to the world and a pure form of energy more powerful than realm energy entered. It felt as though it was the product of the heavens and the feeling felt similar to the realm energy in Hui Realm.

As soon as the actualised dream world received the energy, the

Water Sword was formed at an extraordinary rate.

"It seems that I can trade heavenly karma for energy from the heavens. I'm sure that the righteous gods have used their heavenly karma to gain approval from the heavens and from there start absorbing the spiritual energy in their vicinity!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

The reason he was helping Xu Ren was for this!

"However... If I can gain all these fate energies just by revealing the heavenly tribulations, why didn't the earlier people do it?"

Fang Yuan was confused. After much thought, he smiled to himself.

At the same time as the heavens showed their appreciation, a greyish-black force landed and surrounded him, which appeared sinister.

"If I gain some, I must lose some. Since I have revealed the plans of the heavens, there will be a tribulation that I must go through. This tribulation should be something that I cannot survive through at my current stage... I'm afraid the earlier people would have died if they revealed the heaven's intentions!"

As his heart shook, he quickly released all the heavenly karma that he had.

In his actualised dream world, the Rough Water Sword in the North quickly formed.

Suddenly, the entire array shook. The water-type sword flew upwards. As the water and fire glittered in the array, the actualised dream world expanded.

"Water sword and people Dao karma, go!"

Fang Yuan's spiritual will shook and a golden flower flew out.

The blue water-type sword essence and the red fire-type sword essence appeared in front of him.

"This is not enough! With this, I'm afraid I'm too weak to survive the impending tribulation!"

He had a bad feeling about this. Without thinking much, he spat out a Dragon Pearl. "Water-Fire Dual Sword, White Bone Evil Slaying, three swords, break!"

The powerful sword essence struck on the Dragon Pearl and a golden fluid, dragon's essence, began to flow out.

At the same time, remnants of heavenly karma were transformed into pure elemental energy which landed on the black python.

As the black python looked up and roared, four stumps appeared beneath its body.

The stumps quickly grew and in an explosion, they had become four legs.

This was the 6th Transformation of the Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula! The Giant Venomous Snake Transformation!

The Venomous Snake was considered a young dragon to some, and a poisonous snake to others. It was a mixture of both and had an abundance of dragon properties.

Fang Yuan examined himself. He had a snake's head, four legs and dragon's tail. "A Venomous Snake is merely a four-legged snake or a giant lizard. The snake properties have been transformed into dragon properties. However, to become a dragon, I still have to go through a Dragon Transformation Stage! I need to change my entire physical body to do so!"

Even so, the Venomous Snake would be king among the snakes!

Looking at his stats, he noticed some changes:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: Giant Venomous Snake

Essence: 30

Spirit: 30

Magic: 30

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: [Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Technique (6th Transformation)], [Water Controlling Technique (Grade 5)], [Natural Magical Strength (Grade 2)], [8 Gates Sword Array (3rd Sword (1%))]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Great!"

As he planted his four legs firmly on the ground, Fang Yuan roared like a prehistoric crocodile.

At this point in time, a golden-haired monkey had realised his powerful demonic vibe! It was shocking!

Chapter 274: Betrayal

"Demon King?"

Detecting the energy from the golden-haired monkey, Fang Yuan smiled.

This golden-haired monkey's spiritual aura was much stronger than the previous monkey which attacked him.

If Fang Yuan was still at the 5th Transformation, there was no chance that he could escape alive.

But now, at the 6th Transformation, there was a tremendous difference!

After achieving the Giant Venomous Snake Transformation and strengthening the connection of this dream world to this realm, he could now harness the sword essences of both the fire and water swords. He had confidence against the monkey king!

"What a snake demon!"

Detecting the demonic energy from the giant venomous snake, the golden-haired monkey became shocked. "I am the leader of Canger Mountain, the monkey god! Anything that walks on land is under my jurisdiction. Why do you want to help the humans and cause trouble to the demons?"

If this was last time, the monkey king would have gone straight into the fight without much talk.

Giving Fang Yuan a chance to explain himself was after taking into consideration the fact that he was his own kind, therefore pitying him.

"A demon should be able to do whatever it likes! I'll help whoever I wish! Why do you care so much?"

Fang Yuan laughed.

"Do whatever you like!"

There was a murderous look on the golden-haired monkey's face. Suddenly, he revealed his true physical body. It was a monkey as tall as a small hill, wielding a metal pole and a mask. "Let me do whatever I like and kill you today!"

"Rumble!"

The ground shook and dust flew everywhere.

"The Golden Monkey wipes out all the evil demons!"

Fang Yuan mumbled out a sentence from a poem.

This demon felt more powerful than the previous monkey and was highly skilled in martial arts as well. Therefore, it had the ability to be the king of demons.

Even the three demons from Qi Lake could not compare to it!

"Water-Fire Dual Array, Go!"

Due to the fact that Fang Yuan had linked his actualised dream world to the current realm using his people Dao karma, although he was still unable to actualise the swords, he could harness the sword essences form both swords.

Immediately, two streaks of glows appeared on his body; red and blue. It was as though two dragons had emerged from the ocean and combined forces.

"Clang! Clang!"

The sword essences rained on the iron pole like raindrops hitting a leaf. The force from the Water-Fire Dual Array was continuous.

"Eh? Spiritual sword?"

The golden-haired monkey retreated and realised that the iron pole in his hands was now filled with holes. There was a look of worry on his face. "There are signs of an array as well! Where did you come from?"

"You're about to die soon, so you don't have to know that much!"

Fang Yuan roared, rushed forward and flicked his tail!

"Bang!"

The golden-haired monkey flew backwards and landed on a hill, shaking the entire place.

"Rumble!"

Fang Yuan did not stop. Instead, he opened his mouth wide and started to swallow the monkey.

As he sucked the monkey into his mouth, there was a white glow coming from his mouth. It was the White Bone Evil Slaying Sword. Flying out, it sliced through the iron pole and struck itself into the golden-haired monkey's body.

"... The incarnation which I've painstakingly cultivated.....?"

The golden-haired monkey looked down at his wound and started to have a mysterious look on his face. "Impressive... looks like you've earned the right to fight with my true self!"

...

At the same time, in the Golden Court Lake, Dragon Palace.

In a large square, a huge black water dragon curled up and opened his eyes lazily.

In front of him was a huge jade table with all sorts of delicacies on the tabletop.

"It is my honour to be invited by you, Dragon God..."

As soon as the Monkey God spoke, his expression changed. 'What's happening? How did that snake demon transform into a giant venomous snake? Even my incarnation is being defeated...'

He stood up hurriedly, as though he was about to make his way out.

In the next moment, the entire palace shook. Water-type spiritual energy slowly but forcefully held the Monkey God back

into his place.

"Monkey God, since you're here, you must try my Hundred-Fruit Wine!"

The black dragon slowly spoke as he flicked a bowl of green fruit wine towards the Monkey God.

"This... Alright!"

The Monkey God raised the bowl and drank heartily.

...

"Oh, you are just an incarnation. What a pity your incarnation is injured. How do you think it would affect your true body?"

On the battlefield, Fang Yuan heard the threat from the golden-haired monkey and started to taunt.

"Haha... How would such a small demon like you understand the powers of the monkey king? Even if you kill my incarnation, it will not affect my true body at all..."

The golden-haired monkeys started to laugh heartily.

This statement was, however, admitting that his incarnation was no match for Fang Yuan.

To a demon king, this was unbelievable.

'Where did such a weirdo come from? His physical body is strong, his demonic techniques are powerful and he has such abilities!'

The monkey king felt a little depressed.

His incarnation was no match to Fang Yuan in terms of demonic techniques, magical abilities or even his physical body. How could the fight go on?

"Water and Fire sword essence, explode!"

Suddenly, a streak of red and blue sword essence exploded in front of the monkey king, slicing the iron pole in half.

"Go!"

Seeing this, the Monkey God knew that he had to escape!

After all, he had trained this incarnation's physical body for many years and he was not willing to abandon it just like that.

"You can't escape!"

In a black glow, Fang Yuan's tail curled up and trapped the monkey. "Did you ask me for my permission?"

He still had properties of a python. Seeing that the monkey was trapped, Fang Yuan quickly opened his mouth and engulfed him as though his mouth was like a black hole.

Of course, Fang Yuan would have taken precautions. Before swallowing him, a white-coloured sword flew out of his mouth and through the heart of the monkey.

The next scene was a shocking one.

A monkey as tall as a small hill was being swallowed by a snake with 4 legs, as though a snake was swallowing an elephant.

As Fang Yuan was digesting the incarnation's flesh with his sword essence, he was ripping apart the monkey's soul as well, exploring the secrets within.

...

"What audacity!"

In the Dragon Palace, the bowl of wine in the Monkey God's hand shattered into pieces. "How dare he... How dare he..."

Not only did his incarnation lose to Fang Yuan, it was also swallowed whole.

He could feel the entire process of being swallowed by the snake as well, which made him infuriated.

"Ah... How dare you eat my incarnation! I will skin you alive and eat you for a hundred days!"

The Monkey God stood up and the entire palace shook.

"Monkey God, wait up!"

The black dragon looked over and smiled.

"Why are you stopping me, old dragon?"

The Monkey God's eyes were bloodshot as he glared at the black water dragon. "You invited me here, but it seems like you are helping him. Could the snake be your child?"

"Nope!"

The water dragon opened his mouth and laughed. "I am just following the trend of the world!"

"What do you mean?"

The Monkey God composed himself. At the same time, the imagery of a monkey with 3 heads and 6 limbs appeared behind him.

"The demons will fall and the humans will rise. This is the intention of the heavens!"

The black dragon revealed the truth and the red in his eyes were gone; instead, they appeared wiser.

"Alright! You've finally said it!"

The Monkey God was enraged. "You are the king of demons in the Golden Court Lake! Do you know what you're saying? Do you want to betray the demons?"

"Demons?"

The black-coloured Dragon God let out a laugh. "I'm no longer a demon..."

"Buzz!"

As bubbles covered the dragon, within seconds, it had disappeared. Where it once curled up was a human wearing robes, with the horns of a dragon on his head.

He had a serious expression and spoke with a composed voice. "Since the Thousand-Year tribulation, my dragon body had been destroyed by the tribulation. My soul was unwilling to reincarnate into a dragon and I can only rely on the people Dao to continue living on..."

"I didn't know that after losing my physical body, my soul would be weakened. After recovering from a deep slumber, I had found myself in the body of a human reliant on the people Dao. How can I give it up and dig my own grave?"

"No wonder..."

The Monkey God nodded his head. "Since the Thousand-Year tribulation, you have been living in seclusion and even opened up the Golden Court Lake to humans. I finally know the reason. You are no longer the Dragon King of the demons, but the Golden Court Dragon God of the people!"

"If someone like you could also give up on the demons, it is no wonder the giant venomous snake could do the same... Could it really be destined for the humans to rise?"

There was a look of unwillingness in the Monkey God's eyes. "I can't believe it! We demons have been ruling for so long, why would the humans stand a chance against us?"

"Rumble!"

As he exclaimed, the 3 heads and 6 limbs entered his body. Within seconds, he had transformed into a 100-feet tall monkey. "Old Dragon, I am only below you because I had always believed that you were the dragon and therefore more superior. Now that your dragon body is destroyed, let's see what you have against me! Watch out for my pole!"

"Ah... Monkey God... You're still as rash as before!"

The human-form Golden Court Dragon God seemed like an ant in front of the humongous monkey. However, he shook his head in

disappointment as though it did not care about the incoming pole.

Indeed, in the next moment, the monkey's expression changed. His pole was being held firmly by the Golden Court Dragon God.

It was a shocking scene to behold.

It was like an ant carrying an elephant!

"Although I am on the path of god dao, I have the faith of a few thousand followers. I have already formed my indestructible body. As the officially-appointed Dragon God, I can absorb and harness all the spiritual energy within the lake! It is a fact that the demons will fall and the humans will rise! I am only just following the trend!"

The Golden Court Dragon God continued. "I have every advantage against you. Do you think you can overthrow me, monkey?"

"I'm not convinced!"

Although he knew that he was nothing compared to the Dragon God, his 3 heads started to shriek and his 6 limbs swung around.

"You're dumb!"

The Golden Court Dragon God sighed. "If you're looking for trouble, then die!"

"Rumble!"

There was a huge explosion in the Dragon Palace as the pillars fell.

After the destruction, a storm grew above the lake and in the Dragon Palace, the Monkey God was nowhere to be seen.

Chapter 275: Return

Within the mountains and forests where the vegetation was flattened, the beasts started to retreat.

A 30 feet long giant venomous snake slowly approached the centre. Its stomach was bloated and disproportionate to the rest of its body.

Fang Yuan had used his body's ability to melt objects, and the water and fire sword essence to devour the Golden-furred Monkey King.

His Yin Spirit had also suppressed the Monkey King's magical clones. He had also used the thread-like spiritual will to carefully tease out those useful memories.

Consuming people dao karma could reinforce the actualised dream world and allowed him to regain a small portion of his dream master's capabilities.

It was now second nature for Fang Yuan to devour others to achieve what he wanted.

"I found it...The Three Corpse Seven Murderous Magic Splitting Technique!"

Suddenly, Fang Yuan's eyes lit up as he found a magical formula. Upon closer look, he exclaimed, "Wonderful! This is wonderful beyond words!"

Even though the monkey king sealed up a portion of his memories, Fang Yuan was still able to rake up some information.

Firstly, the Monkey King was the Monkey God and master of the surrounding mountains and forests of the Golden Court Lake! He cultivated in 2 ancient divine techniques, the first being the Three Heads Six Arms Technique and the second being the Three Corpse Seven Murderous Magic Splitting Technique!

The Three Heads Six Arms technique was a powerful divine technique that was not found within the magical clone.

However, the magical clone possessed the magic-splitting technique.

"This magical technique is cultivated by the ancient demons to cleanse their 3 Corpses! Only by cleansing their thoughts will they be successful..."

Fang Yuan was enlightened when he read the string of demonic words.

According to the instructions of the manual, the 3 Corpses referred to the never-ending development of all kinds of dark and gloomy thoughts. Beheading the 3 Corpses was, in reality, a technique to remove all the dark desires and thoughts, leaving behind only the pure divine spirit.

As such, this was essentially a technique which cultivated the divine spirit.

Of course, the beheaded evil thoughts were useful as well. One would be able to use the 7 Murderous Technique to cultivate an elemental clone. This was known as the Three Corpse Seven Murderous Elemental Clone, which was controlled by the primary elemental clone. As it was created by discarded thoughts, it does not cause weakness upon leaving the body and had no implications on the body if it was destroyed. As such, this was a superior magical clone technique.

"Hmmmm, not bad, this type of technique is valuable even among the dream masters!"

Fang Yuan rejoiced and immediately noted it down carefully.

"It is just that...this demon is still at the dragon palace. If he suddenly appears and start killing in a rage..."

Fang Yuan was able to defeat this magical clone easily. However, when faced with the actual Monkey God who was able to use Three

Heads Six Arms Technique, Fang Yuan reckoned that he only had a 50-50 chance of emerging victorious.

"Perhaps I should leave first after achieving such a huge haul?"

Fang Yuan opened both eyes and mulled.

However, at this moment, his whole body shivered as he immediately detected that something was amiss.

Threads of green and gold karma rained down from above, forming a golden flower around the size of a bowl. The golden flower was surrounded by a ring of brilliant green flowers.

The brilliance from the flower melted away the lingering dark energy from the surroundings and his body akin to how the spring sun melts away snow. This caused Fang Yuan to be shocked.

"Increase in karma and dispersing the tribulation aura. The tribulation is already over? How is that possible? The monkey god could still bear it even though I have devoured one of his magical clone? Unless he is dead, there is no doubt that he will be looking for more trouble with me!"

"However, this karma is definitely not fake. I do not care so much. If the heavens dare to give it to me, I will dare to accept!"

Fang Yuan could not care less. He immediately opened his actualised dream world and stored his karma within it. He momentarily achieved a peace of mind.

"Worth it! It will all be totally worth it even if a lightning strikes me down now!"

Fang Yuan arrived beside the river and dived into the water before entering the dark hole in the river.

...

7 days passed.

Under the Heizi River, Fang Yuan occupied a river current and was deep in thought. "It is indeed peaceful. Furthermore, Xu Ren

had received the support of the prefecture. The whole Golden Lake Prefecture had started to purge the evil gods... the Monkey God had not appeared. The demon monkey race of Canger Mountain is in a mess. That means... it is really dead or trapped?"

This indicated that there was interference from another power that was stronger than his. As such, Fang Yuan was momentarily afraid.

"Truth be told, it is enough. The tribulation had started. However, in order for it to be strong, we still have to slowly wait ten years plus for Xu Ren's son, Xu Ting to finally grow up!"

"It is time for me to go back!"

Although the flow of time between the two realms was different, he could tell that it was almost time as he had received a warning from the Realm Spirit.

"Of course... before I leave, I should preserve this body well. I do not want to start all over again the next time I come back!"

Within his sea of consciousness, Fang Yuan's divine spirit released a brilliant light, expelling a small amount of greyish-black colour which combined with the killing aura of the White Bone Evil Slaying Sword to form another small grey ring of light.

This was the result of his seven days of cultivation. A magical clone created using the Three Corpse Seven Murderous Magic Splitting Technique.

As for controlling this type of spiritual will, he was naturally skilled at it as he was a dream master.

Needless to say, this was originally a technique from this realm and as such, there was no problem using this technique in the realm.

This magical clone contained the memories and emotions that he left behind and completely followed orders of the original body. Even if it was destroyed, the magical clone was created from

unwanted desires and would not affect the original body. As such, it was extremely useful.

"After I leave, you are to remain in this body and focus on survival. You must preserve your strength and wait for me to return!"

The primary elemental clone engraved a spiritual will onto the magical clone. It could be said that after it passed on the instructions, it momentarily separated itself.

"Hiss..."

The giant venomous snake opened its eyes and looked at him.

"The newly created Three Corpse Seven Murderous Elemental clone is still extremely weak and unable to be in control of the actual body. However, it does not matter. With the nourishment from the strong body and the previously devoured golden-furred monkey king, the body and spirit will combine and become inseparable!" Fang Yuan thought.

Fang Yuan's Yin spirit was still in the form of the black-clothed youth. When he saw the giant venomous snake lazily rolled over and crawled about as if it understood him, Fang Yuan started to move.

'The magical clone possesses sufficient intellect. In this phase where it is weak, there would be no problem if it hides itself deep within the mountains and forests.....'

After seeing the demon leave the dark riverbed and disappeared into the dense forest, Fang Yuan smiled. With a wave of his hand, a door made of light appeared.

The heavens and earth shuddered. However, no dark clouds formed.

He looked at the heavens and earth and smiled as he disappeared into the door.

...

Da Qian Empire, Ming Region.

Within the district town, in the basement of a residence, Fang Yuan shuddered as he opened his eyes.

The floor was covered in a layer of dust as the area had not been swept for a long time.

As for his body, there were not many changes as he was a Wu Zong.

He frowned as he arrived at the yard. He drew some water from the well to wash up before he went into the kitchen, cooked some spiritual porridge and slowly consumed it.

"At least 10 days have passed since I shut myself out. If I had any servants, they would have felt that something was amiss and made a big ruckus."

He shook his head and started to adjust his energy with his eyes closed. After cultivating for a period of time which was comparable to the time a normal person slept for, he entered the dream world.

"The application is now close!"

The cold and clear voice of the Realm Spirit rang as soon as he appeared. Fang Yuan was unconcerned as he carefully checked the records before realizing. "It seems more than 1 month has passed? That means more than 3 years have passed in the water realm as 10 days here is equivalent to 1 year there? The flow of time is indeed scary..."

Using the dream world as the intermediate stop, one could not only seek protection, but also received warnings from the Realm Spirit for the primary elemental clone to return to the body when the body could no longer sustain the dream-traversing. This was another advantage of using the dream world as the intermediate stop.

At least, the body would not starve to death. This benefit came with some contribution of course.

"Furthermore... after travelling once, there will be a coordinate left behind. Next time, I would be able to go back to the same place using Venerable Dream Traverser's method and could even bring a few friends along..."

The actions in the water realm could be considered an opening act. The tribulations had just started and had not reached its full potential.

It would be time for harvesting in the next dream-traverse!

"The gains this time is significant as well!"

Fang Yuan was pleased as he looked at his stat window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 40

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: Illusionary Divine (2nd Tier), Wu Zong (3rd Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 4) (1%)], Hundred Poison Golden Body (1st Refining), [8 Gates Sword Array (3rd sword)(1%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

His Illusionary Divine Stage had jumped another tier even though it had barely been a month of dream-traversing. This rate of breakthrough was simply unbelievable. Fang Yuan understood the reason why so many dream masters liked to traverse across the realms. The gains were shocking even though it was extremely dangerous.

"That's not all!"

He looked at his actualised dream world and saw that 2 out of the 8 swords in the array had been formed. The sword auras of the Fire and Water-type swords was splendid and endlessly destroy the borders of the dream world, causing the dream world to expand.

In the East, the hilt of a purple sword had started to form. Traces of sparks could be seen surrounding it and it brought about a frightening presence.

"The East trembles! The third spiritual sword is the Sundering Thunder Sword!"

The Lord of Thunder destroys! As such, the Thunder Sword's radiance was extremely threatening and even outstripped the Fire Sword. It was especially effective in destroying demons.

Fang Yuan believed that, should the Thunder Sword actualise, the great demons of the water realm could do nothing but flee!

In the centre of the 8 Gates Sword Array, there was a green source of heavenly energy.

"I traded the Heavenly Karma, which I obtained from killing the Monkey God's magical clone, for this heavenly energy. What is the original source of this heavenly energy? If it is similar to the realm energy, it would greatly aid my cultivation as a dream master!"

Fang Yuan was not in a hurry as he looked outside the sword array.

Outside, there were 7 golden flowers, 1 big and 6 small flowers clustered together and emitted a bright light. Fang Yuan did not know the use of these flower.

"The Heavenly Karma can be used to exchange for heavenly energy. However, people dao Karma can only be used in the water realm. Maybe I should try selling it..."

All these were left behind in preparation for the next dream-

traverse.

The people dao Karma could at least be used for him to quickly regain his dream master's abilities in the water realm.

Of course, it would be better if the dream masters know the other uses for the karma.

Fang Yuan arrived at the stone tablets. He checked for relevant information regarding the uses of the karma before putting up an offer to sell the golden flowers after deliberation.

Chapter 276: A Fortunate Accident

"How's that?"

"I'm sorry, we do not have any Mystery Grade spiritual rice in stock. There might be stock in the bigger shops..."

Fang Yuan walked out of the rice shop and the shopkeeper followed. "You can pre-order with us! Just leave your address with us and I can help you check on the stock from other shops..."

"Forget it, I'm only ordering a few pounds of it..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and walked away.

He had asked around and realised that he was in a place called Yu Ming District Town in Ming Region.

Although it was a secluded town, it was well-equipped with amenities. There was also strict control from the government here and anything out of the ordinary would catch their attention.

"The sale of Mystery Grade spiritual rice is under the jurisdiction of the government. If I buy it in large quantities or engage in trade with its seeds, they will check my background... and I can't let them check mine! There are even restrictions when buying rice for personal consumption, so I shouldn't even think about the Yellow Grain Rice..."

Fang Yuan sighed and turned into an alley.

Once he walked out of the alley, he had transformed into another person.

As he approached his own mansion, he used his spiritual will to ensure that no one was following him before he entered the mansion.

Behind the master bedroom, there was a small courtyard surrounded by four walls and a ceiling; it was airtight.

As he walked in, an energy field started to surge around him and

there was a faint eagle's caw.

"I now know the complete Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique. Although it only has a maximum potential of forming 8 spiritual meridians, I can use it as a foundation to experiment and push my Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique to the 6th meridian. Once that is achieved, I would have completed my foundation to achieve all 9 meridians..."

Although he could also condense the Divine Body with 8 meridians with the above-average Giant Spiritual Divine Body, Fang Yuan was a perfectionist and would only settle for the best.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

At this point in time, he struck his claws out and as the energy surged through his body, he took up the form of a majestic giant.

A few hours passed.

Fang Yuan kept his claws, controlled his breathing and breathed out a streak of white breath.

He wiped his sweat off and commented. "By adapting from the Giant Spiritual Technique, I have made adjustments to the first 3 spiritual meridians. Finally, I can start to train and form the 4th and 5th..."

Finally, he had cleared the huge obstacle on his path of martial arts progression.

"If I have the assistance from spiritual objects and the proficiency points bar, my progress in martial arts might even be quicker than my cultivation as a dream master!"

Fang Yuan gulped down a bowl of spiritual porridge and frowned. "What a pity... These spiritual grains are too low-quality. Do I really have to... get a piece of spiritual land in Da Qian Empire?"

The spiritual porridge was only of Yellow Grade. Fang Yuan felt

disgusted after eating it and quickly finished up before going to the meditation room. As he closed his eyes, he entered the Dream Realm.

"Ding! Ding!"

"Ding! Ding!"

As soon as he entered, the jade inscription plate around his waist was ringing continuously, which gave Fang Yuan a shock. "Is that golden flower really that popular?"

Although he did not manage to gather any information regarding people's karma, he still pinned up an announcement to sell the golden flower and did not guess that the response would be so good.

"It seems like... this is really something!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin as the notifications popped up.

"How much are you selling this golden flower for?"

"I'm willing to pay 50 contribution points!"

"The highest I can go is 100 contribution points!"

...

Ten over messages flooded the inscription plate and most of them were people naming their prices and showing their interest in buying the golden flower. Some of them even tried to fish out information from Fang Yuan as to where he had obtained these flowers. Seeing all of these, Fang Yuan smiled to himself.

He only paid attention to two messages out of the many.

The first was from Feng Xinzi. It seemed as though he was too bored from recuperating, which was why he had left a message for Fang Yuan. "Good move, Brother Fang! However, this object is extremely precious and mysterious. You won't be able to find any information regarding it in the Dream Realm. Let's meet up and discuss about it..."

The other one had a symbol of a white lotus. A clear voice came out of the symbol. "It seems that you, brother, have found a Karma World for yourself and are trying to sell its coordinates! The Divine Lotus Cult will not disappoint you, my brother!"

"How direct! This spiritual will seems familiar..."

As Fang Yuan pressed on the white lotus symbol, the white lotus brightened up and its petals unfolded. Not long after, a clear voice was heard. "Are you the brother that is selling the karma flower?"

"I am!"

As soon as Fang Yuan replied, he could hear a sharp voice of a lady. "It's you! Fang Yuan? I can recognise your spiritual will and your voice!"

"Are you Meng Lian?"

Fang Yuan recalled the divine lady from the Divine Lotus Cult and smiled.

Initially, this lady had pulled him into the Dream Realm and had earned quite a bit from it. However, since she had opened up an ocean of possibilities for him, they were even.

After a long while of silence, Meng Lian's voice rung again. "Who would've thought that... You would have reached such a stage! However, Let me warn you. Although the rewards from these worlds are big, you cannot explore them alone as they are too dangerous. If you hand over the coordinates to this world, I can assure you the position of an Outer Deacon in the Divine Lotus Cult!"

"And after that?"

After hearing her, Fang Yuan snickered. This lady knew that he had no backing and therefore was more direct and bold with her words.

Only a fool would hand over a gold mine in exchange for a title!

"After that? What else do you want? Do you know how popular the Divine Lotus Sect is?"

"Say no more!"

Fang Yuan was speechless. He cut the line and ignored her.

...

In the real world.

"You..."

In a secret hideout, there was a pond full of white lotuses. In the middle, there was a lady dressed in white and she had a smooth skin. However, she was agitated as she clenched her teeth. "Very well... you have rejected me once and now you rejected my offer yet again. Do you even respect the Divine Lotus Cult?"

She knew that Fang Yuan had no backing. Shouldn't he be thankful to have such an appointment in the cult?

Who did he think he was to touch such a precious world? He should obediently give it up!

"This person is progressing too fast and is lucky in everything he does. This is indeed mysterious..."

Meng Lian composed herself but revealed a sly look on her face. "However... I am the one who introduced you to the Dream Realm. No matter how neutral the Realm Spirit might be, I'm sure there's something I can do..."

...

In the Dream Realm.

In a tea house, Fang Yuan ordered a pot of spiritual tea.

He had used contribution points to buy this pot of spiritual tea. It was sweet and fragrant and the best part was that his spirit could drink it directly.

"Brother Fang!"

Not long after, Feng Xinzi entered and appeared anxious. "Have you sold the golden flower?"

"Haha... Why are you so anxious?"

Fang Yuan calmly poured a cup of tea and waved his hands. "Please take a seat! You have always been the one footing the bill so let me play host this time!"

"Anything!"

Feng Xinzi knew that he had lost his composure. He sat down and took in a deep breathe before raising his teacup. "Please forgive me for my anxiety. I'll drink this cup of tea as an apology!"

"That's alright!"

Fang Yuan sipped the spiritual tea and felt a cooling sensation. "Should we... discuss about the karma flower?"

"So you do know that that is a karma flower..."

Feng Xinzi laughed. "I was dumb to think that I could take advantage of you and thought that you had obtained the flower by luck. It seems that your luck and cultivation is indeed shocking to be able to explore such a world."

"Is such a world rare?"

Fang Yuan was shocked. He recalled Hui Realm and Da Qian Empire. Although there were involvements of karma in these worlds, they were not as obvious and direct as they were in the Water Realm. Furthermore, the karma in the Water Realm could directly affect his luck and power.

"Not just rare, but super rare!"

Feng Xinzi shook his head and gave off an expression of 'you-lucky-brat'. "Furthermore, although us dream masters rule thousands of worlds, we have yet to discover a world more powerful than Da Qian. These type of Karma Worlds are the hardest to infiltrate due to their tribulations. Any wrong step

would lead to a lightning tribulation in these worlds..."

"What is the most valuable thing in these worlds?"

Fang Yuan could guess that no one would share their experience in dream-traversing to other worlds. Even if he were to join any organisation, he guessed that he would need to be someone of status before he would even be allowed to look at information regarding the Karma Worlds.

"Brother, you're greedy. Since you've gone there, you should know..."

Feng Xinzi continued. "The most valuable treasure in a Karma World is firstly, the spiritual treasures which you can make illusionary and this depends on your luck. Secondly, imperial orders from the heavens. Although you will not be able to become a god, you can use it for other purposes. Lastly, the karma in that world. Both heavenly karma and people dao karma are rare!"

'Rare?'

Fang Yuan was confused but in a short while, he understood.

A complete Karma World would have an organisation structure for the god dao and people would guard over the world forming a tightly-knitted system in the world. Anything out of the ordinary would be noticed by the deities and any unknown but powerful beings would immediately experience a heavenly tribulation. Therefore, foreigners like them would find it hard to survive in such a world.

Fang Yuan was lucky to have understood the trend of the Water Realm and therefore could follow the trend, making his stay effortless.

"Indeed..."

Thoughts raced through his mind and Fang Yuan appeared fearful. "I have put in so much effort and yet only obtained 3 karma flowers. After using 2 of them, I was even chased by powerful

demons and almost died."

"You have gained quite a lot considering that it's your first time!"

Feng Xinzi complimented him.

"Alright, other than allowing us to integrate easier into that realm, what other purposes would this karma flower have? There are really a lot of interested buyers..."

Fang Yuan raised his ever-blinking inscription plate and deleted the notifications.

The greedy Realm Spirit charged him for such a simple service, which made him roll his eyes.

Chapter 277: Dream Future Master

"This karma flower... this karma flower..."

Feng Xinzi laughed. He knew that Fang Yuan was clueless about the karma flower. "Firstly, it can be used to allow us to integrate into the world faster. We will also be able to call for help from outside the world! Also... it can be used in some rare alchemy and equipment-smelting techniques."

"If this is so, shouldn't it be not heavily sought after?"

Fang Yuan raised his eyebrows.

"Of course, some people believe that... If one has enough of these karma, they can directly create the Realm Evidence to that realm, or predict the coordinates of that realm from the karma that came from there!"

Feng Xinzi revealed the truth but placed emphasis that it was only a probability. "It is only a possibility and has yet to be proven..."

"I see!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and believed what Feng Xinzi had said.

He knew the importance and value of Realm Evidence. It could be possible for the Realm Evidence to be exchanged using a huge amount of heavenly karma but would require an impossibly huge amount of people dao karma.

"If this is so, I have no qualms to sell it to you... Considering the demand for it and the fact that even the Divine Lotus Cult is also after it, please offer me a high price!"

He looked at the anxious Feng Xinzi and commented.

"I'll be honest with you, brother... You're right. My alchemy progress has reached a bottleneck. I am intending to produce a

pill's spirit in order to achieve a breakthrough..."

Feng Xinzi let out a bitter smile. "Through preparations, I have 50 percent confidence in achieving the breakthrough. With the karma flowers, I might add another 5 percent! Therefore, the price that I will offer you will surely be the highest. I might not have enough contribution points but I can compensate that with spiritual pills! As for the Divine Lotus Cult... stay away from them, brother!"

"Oh? Why should I? The price that they are offering seems to be the highest as of now!"

Fang Yuan purposely probed to find out more.

"Not just that, I'm sure they are very interested in the coordinates of the world, right?"

Feng Xinzi shook his head. "I don't know much about them. I only know that the dream masters of the Divine Lotus Cult seem to be able to retain most of their power in these worlds. It was rumoured that the ancestors of the cult had gained a lot from these Karma Worlds and therefore, since then, they would put in a lot of effort to locate such worlds... A few dream masters who once worked with them by acceding to their requests didn't end up well!"

Fang Yuan was shocked as soon as he heard the description from Feng Xinzi.

"Forget it... Let's see the deal through! How many contribution points do you have left?"

Fang Yuan glanced at Feng Xinzi as though he wanted to take advantage of him.

...

"You're indeed an alchemy master! Look at your wealth!"

After a short while, Fang Yuan walked out of the tea house with a

smile on his face.

Although Feng Xinzi had already spent a fortune trying to form the pill spirit, his savings were already enough to satisfy Fang Yuan.

"As for what he said about the Divine Lotus Cult, I really need to be careful!"

Fang Yuan came to the rock tablet, spent some contribution points and started to look for information.

There was a change of expression on his face:

"A guide - The experienced dream masters in the Dream Realm have the responsibility to bring in new dream masters. With every new member, the dream master who introduced the new member would be rewarded with 500 contribution points... Furthermore, this dream master will be the official guide of the new member. By using 1,000 contribution points, the dream master will be able to get updates about the new member and will be able to locate the new member. However, in order to protect the privacy of the new member, the location services will only be accurate to the region!"

After reading the description, Fang Yuan chuckled. "No wonder she's so good to me! It was her plan all along! Considering that she's an evil woman, this is no surprise!"

It was fortunate that the location services could only locate him by the region. Da Qian Empire was huge and it was almost impossible to find a dream master within a region.

"It's too easy for new members to be cheated..."

Fang Yuan exclaimed. "Realm Spirit! I want to remove the association with my guide!"

"Di! I've checked that your guide, [Bai Lian](#), has not fulfilled her responsibility. Your request has been approved!"

There was an almost-immediate reaction from the Realm Spirit.

Fang Yuan heaved a sigh of relief.

It was a small thing, but it was a matter if Meng Lian had realised it.

Now that he had removed all associations with her, they were now completely unrelated.

"Divine Lotus Cult... I'll take note!"

Fang Yuan gave a cold look before coming offline.

...

In the Dream Realm, there was a void space decorated with white lotuses; it was the area used by the Divine Lotus Cult.

There was a cold look in Meng Lian's eyes. "Realm Spirit, I want to exercise my rights as a guide to pay 1,000 contribution points in exchange for Fang Yuan's location!"

In reality, there was not much use in determining the region in which Fang Yuan was in.

However, the location could be refined with the help of the Divine Lotus Cult.

Previously, Fang Yuan had no value to her, but now, Bai Lian had come to a decision.

"This service will cost you 1,000 contribution points. Deducted!"

The robotic voice of the Realm Spirit was heard and a long silence followed.

"Di! The other person has removed his association with you. Location services have failed!"

"Respectable dream master, due to the fact that you did not fulfil your responsibility as a guide, the Realm Spirit will now deduct the initial 500 contribution points!"

The Realm Spirit's voice was heard once more, which shocked Bai Lian. "What?"

The title of a guide was as fragile as paper. If their relationship was severed, then it would have no purpose. Otherwise, it could be used to manipulate the dream master under the guide. There were instances of dream masters that have been disadvantaged due to this rule.

"D*mn it!"

The knuckles in Meng Lian's fingers cracked and there was a ferocious look on her beautiful face. "Fang Yuan, you cannot run!!!"

Although she could no longer use the location services provided by the Realm Spirit, there were many more things that she could do.

Thinking about it, she left the Dream Realm and arrived at her secret hideout.

It was a temple. In it, there was no god. Rather, there was a lotus flower carved from white jade with a tablet in front. There were no words on the tablet but rather, there was a row of mysterious-looking runes which flashed a golden glow.

"I am follower Meng Lian, and as I pray with sincerity, I invite Grandmaster to appear!"

Meng Lian appeared serious as she lighted the incense and prayed.

"Buzz! Buzz!"

Green smoke emerged and the petals on the white lotus on the altar started to open. A blurred figure emerged and there was a glow everywhere.

"Greetings, Grandmaster!"

Bai Lian paid her greetings respectfully.

"Forget it!"

A voice was heard on the altar; it sounded neither male or female.

"You are a reserved Divine Lady. In front of a true Divine Lady, you can only make one request. Think carefully!"

"I have thought through carefully!"

Meng Lian gritted her teeth and a white lotus appeared on her forehead. In it, there was the image of a young man; it was Fang Yuan. "This person has the coordinates of a Karma World. Grandmaster, please help me in locating him!"

"Mm, it is indeed fate for you to discover such a lead!"

The voice from the altar appeared shocked. With the wave of its hand, the white lotus from Meng Lian's forehead flew towards it.

Meng Lian remained still and had utmost confidence in the person before her.

This Grandmaster was a highly-skilled dream master and a dream future master. The Grandmaster could let the happenings take place in its dream world and take into consideration the trend of the world to foretell the future. The Grandmaster was spot-on every single time it made a prediction.

Of course, the Grandmaster had its limitations.

Every time it proceeds with a prediction, it would consume a lot of elemental energy.

If the person being investigated on had too high a cultivation level, the information the Grandmaster would receive would be fewer.

Furthermore, there was the possibility of backlash as well. If the Grandmaster were to predict the opposite of what would happen, the Grandmaster would be likely to die.

"Although the information you provided is limited to his looks and his name, I am powerful enough to predict the future of that small dream master!"

Meng Lian quickly gathered her thoughts. If not for the fact that

she shared the same heritage with the Grandmaster, as a reserved Divine Lady, she might not even have the rights to get help. It was a great favour from the Grandmaster to agree to help her.

"If I can obtain the coordinates of that Karma World, everything will be worth it!"

Her eyes glistened as thoughts ran wild in her mind.

"Hmm... This person's future is blurred and it is extremely hard to predict his future. However, since you only require his location, that is simple..."

After a short while, the figure on the altar spoke again.

A small slip of paper appeared in mid-air and glided down. On the piece of paper, a few names of places were written down.

Seeing this, Meng Lian was overjoyed.

"After this, we are even. Take care of yourself!"

With a flash, the figure disappeared. What was left behind was the lotus on the altar as how it was before.

Hearing the words from the Grandmaster, Meng Lian felt a little lost.

...

"Hmm? Why do I feel a little worried..."

In the small district town, Fang Yuan was practising his martial arts. Suddenly, he felt a chill down his spine.

"I only have enemies from Thousand Year Mountain and Divine Lotus Cult. The Thousand Year Mountain might be able to trace me until here but even Lin Qianye will not be able to make me feel as such. Only the presence of Venerable Longhu would make me feel like this..."

Fang Yuan appeared solemn. "Could this mean... The Divine Lotus Cult? Meng Lian is indeed scheming..."

To survive this, he could only rely on himself.

He took a quick glance at this stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 40

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: Illusionary Divine (2nd Tier), Wu Zong (3rd Meridian)
Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 4 (5%)), [Hundred Poison Golden Body (1st Refining)], [8 Gates Sword Array (3rd Sword) (2%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Although my spiritual techniques and my martial arts are improving, they are taking too long. The only thing I can make use of will be the heavenly energy from the Water Realm..."

Fang Yuan's consciousness entered his actualised dream world. Looking at the green ball floating in his 8 Gates Word Array, he remained silent.

The force that he could exchange from heavenly karma was extremely similar to the realm energy from the Hui Realm. Both of them could directly increase a dream master's cultivation level and were extremely rare.

Based on his guess, this would be the purest form of heavenly energy. Or rather, the source of energy of the world. It was a common form of energy across all worlds as they would come from the same source.

"If I can obtain huge amounts of heavenly energy from the worlds, it would only be a matter of time before I achieve consecutive breakthroughs..."

Looking at the ball of heavenly energy in front of him, he sighed.
"This is too little..."

As more and more swords were formed in the 8 Gates Sword Array, the resources needed to form the next sword would increase exponentially. This ball of energy was not enough!

Bai Lian is Meng Lian's actual name.

Chapter 278: Breakthrough

As a dream master reaches the higher levels of cultivation, it would become exponentially difficult to achieve a breakthrough.

Fang Xinzi, a dream alchemy master, had already landed himself into bankruptcy in order to achieve the breakthrough.

Fang Yuan had encountered the same problem as well.

To form the Thunder Sword to completion, all that he gained from the Water Realm was not sufficient.

"Fortunately... I still have my martial arts. Although I am at the 4 Grade of Qian Kun Spiritual Technique, the resources required is much lesser than what I will need to form the 3rd sword in the 8 Gates Sword Array. Therefore, there is still a chance for me to achieve a breakthrough!"

As he focused, the green-coloured ball of energy flowed out from his actualised dream world into his body and immediately, he could feel a warm fuzzy feeling.

"Mmmm!"

Fang Yuan let out a sound of satisfaction. It was as though he was soaking in a hot spring and there were thousands of ants crawling on his limbs and biting him.

"This is due to the fact that my progress is too quick and a normal human's body would not be able to take it... Fortunately for me, I have the Hundred Poison Golden Body!"

As Fang Yuan slowly felt the expansion of his elemental force like an enraged dragon, he was overjoyed.

If not for his Hundred Poison Golden Body and the fact that his physical body was incredibly strong, he would likely have exploded like a bomb and become a pile of bloodied mess.

But now, streaks of gold glistened on his skin. He forcefully

contained the intense elemental force into his body and guided it to breakthrough towards the 4th Grade of Giant Eagle Metal Body.

"5% - 10% - 50%!!!"

On the stats window, the progress behind the Giant Eagle Metal Body rose quickly.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Behind Fang Yuan, the 3 spiritual meridians subconsciously appeared. Another one was slowly being formed, albeit illusionary. As it glowed, it slowly became permanent.

The 4 spiritual meridians worked together to reveal the image of a person, half-human and half-eagle. The person was facing the sky, chirping. The energy around the person surged and the sand beneath his feet was stirred.

"60% - 70% - 90%!!!"

As the heavenly energy was being consumed, his progression shot up and arrived at 99%!

"Bang! Bang!"

Although Fang Yuan had an extremely hardy physical body, his pores had started to bleed and his skin started to stretch. It was as though he had become a human balloon.

"Break... through!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed and his strong spiritual will remained steadfast. In an instant, he had broken through.

"100%"

On the stats window, the number behind the Giant Eagle Metal Body became blurred.

"Phew..."

Fang Yuan composed his breathing. It felt as though the elemental force in his body had found an opening to escape.

At the same time, there were a few changes to his physical body. Beneath his skin, a layer of green glow appeared. As it fused with his original golden body, the outcome was a dim golden glow.

"Finally, I've broken through!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he glanced at his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 42

Spirit: 36

Magic: 40

Profession: Dream Soldier Master

Cultivation: Illusionary Divine (2nd Tier), Wu Zong (4th Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 5) (1%)], [Hundred Poison Golden Body (1st Refining)], [8 Gates Sword Array (3rd Sword) (2%)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"I've formed a new spiritual meridian!"

Fang Yuan tested out his techniques. The 5th Grade of Giant Eagle Metal Body was indeed different. Elemental force flowed around like a huge river. Through his 4 spiritual meridians, there was a blurred figure behind him.

"This is the illusionary shadow of the Divine Body. Of course... It is only a shadow! To condense the Divine Body, there's still a lot more to be done..."

Fang Yuan felt his own forearm.

After the improvement he had made in his martial arts, he felt that his physical body was strengthened and that his sense of sight and hearing were improved as well.

Of course, compared to Lin Qianye, who had a nose more

sensitive than that of a dog's, his cultivation was still far from him.

But now, with the twitch of his ear, he could hear a commotion outside his mansion.

After hearing a few sentences, he let out a bitter smile. "Did I really attract so much attention from my breakthrough? Nevermind... I wasn't planning to stay here for long anyway!"

He picked up his clothing and left in a blurred shadow as he leapt across the wall.

"Hold up! I am the Eagle Lieutenant of Da Qian! Who are you?"

From the direction of the government office, a group of martial artists were rushing towards Fang Yuan. The one leading the pack was a Wu Zong and as he saw Fang Yuan taking his leave, he exclaimed.

"I would be a fool to wait here!"

Fang Yuan gently leapt and spread his arms like how an eagle would spread its wings. After leaping through a few yards, he turned into a small alley and disappeared.

With the experience from Yang Fan's dream world and through his own investigations, he knew that although the walls of the district town were not tall, there were traps laid there, like talismans or bows. If he were to cross the walls, he might be ambushed.

Since the district town was rather large, he could look for a place to hide before trying to escape at night.

"Sir?!"

A few soldiers were dressed in martial artists' robes. "How should we settle this?"

Fang Yuan was cunning and it would be practically impossible to find him in the large district town.

"Wait up!"

The Eagle Lieutenant was a well-built man with sharp eyes and a menacing look. He quickly waved his hands and after a few moments, a constable arrived with an official document. "Sir, we've checked his background!"

"Hmm? Fang Yun? He doesn't have a history at all! He's a phoney!"

After reading a few lines of the document, he could deduce what had happened. "The few of you are too lax!"

"Sir, please forgive us!"

The constable shivered and broke out in cold sweat.

He knew the unspoken rule. The higher up had to do this not because of money, but because they were forced to.

After all, these people with fake identities would generally have martial arts. They might even be a Wu Zong or a spiritual knight! If they become angry, no one could handle them!

"Forget it..."

The Eagle Lieutenant could guess what had happened and did not continue to probe further. Instead, he started to look around at the surroundings.

After a while, he gave a gentle expression. "We're fortunate that he is just a new Wu Zong and has no evil intentions... But he really has the guts to breakthrough in the middle of the city, hehe... does he really think that no one is in charge of this place?"

The others felt a little depressed after hearing it.

It was indeed surprising that he did not attempt his breakthrough in the forest or wilderness, but right in the centre of the bustling city!"

"Since he has left on his own accord, it means that he has no evil intentions. However, we will still have to file a report for this and do the necessary investigations..."

The lieutenant mulled for a while before coming to a decision.
"Search carefully and tighten security during your patrols!"

This was just trying to ensure peace in the district town.

"Smart move, Sir!"

The few soldiers bowed and heaved a sigh of relief.

Since Fang Yuan did not commit any heinous crime, no one would be willing to risk their lives fighting a Wu Zong.

After all, among all of them, only the lieutenant had broken through to the realm of elemental force. All of them were unnecessary and a burden if they were to engage Fang Yuan.

Seeing this, the lieutenant shook his head and sighed.

If it was in his younger days, he would want to serve the country with all his might. But now, as he grew older, he had to consider for his family before acting rashly.

This was only normal as he was a human.

...

It was nightfall.

The moon was extremely beautiful.

In the government office, a few constables fainted. The lieutenant was enraged. "What audacity! How dare you enter the government office without permission and use your demonic techniques? Are you not afraid that you will be captured by our soldiers?"

The Eagle Lieutenant was furious. Looking at the few people in white around him, there was a look of fear and anger on his face.

Although his district might not be able to handle these people, it would become a big case and the Imperial Court would surely bring them to justice!

Even the normal evil highly-skilled martial artists or cults had to

be wary!

By then, soldiers from the county and region would gather. These people were just ants and were extremely easy to kill.

"Hehe... I'm really scared!"

With a gentle laughter, a girl in white robes descended. She had a fragrance and her eyes were beautiful. "But... How will your Da Qian Imperial Court deal with my Divine Lotus Cult?"

"Ah... you're a demon from the Divine Lotus Cult!"

The Eagle Lieutenant shrieked, turned around and started to run!

Normal spiritual knights, sects and powerful families might fear the Imperial Court, but this would not include the 5 alliances of the dream masters!

This was especially so for the Divine Lotus Cult! Previously, they were involved in an assassination of an official of a region. The Imperial Court was infuriated and sent out highly skilled martial artists to deal with the cult. For 10 years, both sides had suffered losses and in the end, there was no conclusion.

Compared to an official of a region, he was only a small Eagle Lieutenant! What could he do?

Therefore, he turned around and ran away without hesitation.

"Hehe... I like smart people!"

"Stop!"

The Eagle Lieutenant was extremely quick. As he leapt, he managed to emerge out and was about to jump across the walls.

Suddenly, there was a voice. His nose picked up an intoxicating fragrance and it was as though a person was next to him, whispering into his ears.

"8 Forms of Magical Dragon, to the ends of the world!"

The well-built man bit his tongue and snapped out of his trance.

Suddenly, there was an illusionary shadow of a blood dragon appearing on his legs.

At the same time, there were many white flower petals raining down in the vicinity. As the white petals landed on him, they entered his body.

"I cannot sleep! I cannot sleep!"

The lieutenant was shouting to himself, but even the sharp pain on his tongue was not enough to wake him up. As his eyes slowly shut, he could vaguely see the people in white approaching him. Finally, he could no longer resist and fainted.

"Dream accessing!"

Meng Lian walked up. With an innocent look, she placed a smooth and white finger on the forehead of the lieutenant.

After a while, she opened her eyes with a look of shock. "It is Fang Yuan indeed. He has escaped! Quickly search for him!"

"Yes!"

The people in white bowed and vanished in a second.

Chapter 279: Intent to Kill

"Protect the district leader!"

"Quickly use your spiritual spells to request backup from the county!"

"Where is the Eagle Lieutenant?"

...

Although it was midnight, such a commotion shook the entire government office.

In the small courtyard with the presence of the district leader and district minister, there was a small array. Spiritual inscriptions glittered. Of course, against the demons from the Divine Lotus Sect, it could only give them a small sense of protection.

The commotion in the government office ensued as constables gathered in front of the office with their bows ready.

Alas, all of these were for show. All of them knew that the enemy was where the Eagle Lieutenant was but none of them dared to offer their assistance.

"The demon from Divine Lotus Cult!"

The district leader wore simple clothes. Seeing this scene, he clenched his fists so hard that his fingernails went into his flesh, and bit his lips till they were bleeding. "This country is not like a country anymore! For the people, I must destroy this demon one day!"

"Please mind your words, Sir!"

Beside him, there was an old housekeeper. "The previous region leader said the exact same words. Afterwards, he was assassinated by the people of the Divine Lotus Cult, which was a huge insult to the Da Qian Imperial Court... Afterwards, both sides engaged in

many more killings and many innocent people were harmed in the process. The civil war destroyed 17 cities and killed as many as a few thousand, and the royal family of Da Qian knew that it was no longer sustainable..."

If they continued to fight, havoc would ensue everywhere.

After all, the Divine Lotus Cult did not need to care about the lives of others but it was different for the Imperial Court; at least on the surface, they had to care.

If Da Qian were to carry on with the losing war, they would bring themselves to their self-destruction. Therefore, they had to give in.

Li Zhun knew who was behind it and felt depressed. "Dream masters... They are an evil tumour of this world! We need to eradicate them to obtain peace!"

...

"Did the district leader study too much and become foolish?"

Hearing what Li Zhun had just said, he almost spat out blood.

If it was another dream master who heard this, District Leader Li would probably not live to see the next day.

"... However, this is also true for other regions with exceptional martial arts and powerful organisations!"

"Furthermore, dream masters are much more powerful than the average person, Wu Zongs and spiritual knights. They can even create things from nothing and actualise spiritual lands, resources and even tribes, which is unbearable."

"If we have a new king fortunate enough to eradicate the dream masters, the next would be to wipe out the spiritual knights. After that, it would be to ban all martial arts and there would be peace everywhere."

Strictly speaking, the power of dream masters had caused them to receive the most hatred from people.

Although they had a high status due to their power, it was not a good thing.

Thinking about it, Fang Yuan's eyes glistened.

Of course, it was none of his business as to what the dream masters or the Imperial Court would do.

Looking towards the direction of the commotion, he gave off a cold look. "Meng Lian... She's looking for trouble! Does she really think that I am weak? Look at how many people she brought along with her!"

All of these were just distractions.

He had created the illusion that he was about to escape so that he could remain in hiding and see what he would do next.

He was extremely clear what he had to do.

The Divine Lotus Cult was persistent and he did not know what Meng Lian did to locate where he was hiding.

"There are about 10 Wu Zongs, 3 spiritual knights and Meng Lian herself, a dream master... Now that she had brought along 6 Wu Zongs in white robes and 2 spiritual knights, there are 6 more!"

All of these should be the people of the Divine Lotus Cult that they could gather in the region.

If she were to lead them to their deaths, Meng Lian would not be able to answer to the cult.

"What a risky move!"

Fang Yuan watched as Bai Lian and her people entered the government office and killed the Eagle Lieutenant. He was expressionless as he could finally account for all the manpower that the Divine Lotus Sect had in this region.

If Fang Yuan was still at the cultivation level when he first arrived at Da Qian, he would not be able to go head-on against all these people and would have to hide.

"But now?"

"Let's head to Fang Yuan's mansion to take a look. We can find some objects with his spiritual aura. Even if we have to execute the Blood Searching Technique, we cannot let him run away!"

Meng Lian walked out of the government office with her hands stained with the lieutenant's blood. She paid no attention to it and continued to give out orders to the people around her.

"Yes, Ma'am!"

A few Wu Zongs in white robes replied.

At this moment, a lotus print appeared on Meng Lian's forehead. Suddenly, it exploded as flower petals fell down and covered her in an attempt to protect its owner.

"Water and Fire sword essence, explode!"

At the moment of the appearance of the lotus flower, a red and blue glow suddenly appeared above her head and exploded!

"Whoosh! Chi! Chi!"

Numerous streaks of red and blue struck around and blood spurted everywhere!

The 3 Wu Zongs protecting Meng Lian were sliced into pieces!

The 3 other Wu Zongs shrieked and flew back as they sustained severe injuries.

Only the spiritual knight had a self-activated protective talisman which protected him from the strike. However, his hand was still bleeding.

The Water-Fire Dual Sword Array at its full potential did not disappoint Fang Yuan. It took many lives in an instant.

"It's you! Fang Yuan!!!"

Meng Lian looked at the silhouette before her and gritted her teeth in anger. "How dare you go against us?"

If Fang Yuan did not appear before her, she would never have thought that this dream master without the backing of an organisation would be so cruel.

With just a sword essence, 3 Wu Zongs were sliced up!

This was akin to a harmless rabbit transforming into a big bad wolf!

"You are already all out against me. I can only retaliate!"

Fang Yuan appeared.

With the fire sword in his hands, he walked forward.

"Kill!"

Although the 3 remaining Wu Zongs were severely injured, they mustered their courage and in an instant, 3 spiritual meridians appeared behind their backs. They were prepared to combine forces and fight to their deaths.

"It's useless..."

The actualised Fire Sword had a dragon on the handle. The blade of the sword was like a flame. With a simple swipe, the sword radiance was released and in an instant, the killer moves of all 3 Wu Zongs were countered.

Walking forward, he struck a sword at each and every one of them, killing all 3 Wu Zongs.

Their Golden Silk Armour and Elemental Force Protection were useless defences against he Leaving Fire Sword.

All of his actions had demonstrated the power of a 4th Meridian Wu Zong and a magical soldier, which pushed the power of a dream soldier master to its maximum potential!

"Magical soldier?"

The remaining Wu Zongs looked at the fire sword which appeared on Fang Yuan's hand and made a guess. "You are a dream

soldier master?"

"That's right, but you're too late!"

In an instant, Fang Yuan came before them and ended their lives with a simple lunge.

In a red glow, the spiritual knight felt as though the entire world was lying on him and that he had no means of escape.

"Posture of the Heavenly Lotus! Go!"

Meng Lian finally reacted to what had happened. She quickly executed the technique and the flower petals in front of her flew and shielded the spiritual knight from Fang Yuan.

"Underground Burrow!"

The spiritual knight bit his tongue and spat out a mouthful of blood. Brown-coloured spiritual inscriptions appeared on his body as he started to burrow underground.

"Why struggle?"

Fang Yuan sighed and sliced his Leaving Fire Sword down, breaking apart the petals in front of the spiritual knight.

He mysteriously arrived at a seemingly random spot and struck his sword into the ground!

"Rumble!"

The ground cracked and the crack lines resembled a spiderweb. Smoke gushed out of the cracked lines.

As soon as he pulled his sword out, blood gushed out like a geyser.

"Alright, now all that's left is you!"

Fang Yuan plucked his sword, stood up and looked at Meng Lian.

The lady before her was only a newly-promoted dream master. To him, it was a matter of a few strikes of his sword. However, as a reserved Divine Lady, he was unsure if she had any protective

treasures with her.

"You want to kill me? It's not that simple!"

Seeing how Fang Yuan could easily finish off her subordinates, Meng Lian forced herself to regain her composure. "It's my fault for not knowing how powerful you are, but... by killing all my subordinates, it seems that you have decided to make enemies with the Divine Lotus Cult!"

"You have started all this!"

Fang Yuan sighed as he struck his Fire Sword out.

"Ding!"

There was a metallic sound as the sword touched the flower petals. The white lotus shook before calming down, but Meng Lian who was within was unharmed.

"It's useless... As the reserved Divine Lady, I have the protection of the Divine Lotus Print, your weak sword essence can do nothing..."

She stopped halfway and her expression changed.

In Fang Yuan's left hand, a shorter magical sword appeared. It was blue and had chilly vibes.

"Water-Fire Dual Array, kill together!"

Fang Yuan struck both swords out together. The red sword essence quickly combined with the blue sword essence and there was an exponential increase in power.

"Bang!"

Under the Water-Fire Dual Sword Array, even the Divine Lotus Print would not be able to hold. There were cracks forming and it looked extremely unstable.

"If I can use master's 8 Gates Sword Array all at once, it would be extremely powerful! However, this would also mean that people

would be able to identify it and know who my master is. Among the dream soldier masters, there are too many that are using the Water-Fire Dual Sword Array. Therefore, I can still use it without too much concern!"

Thoughts ran through Fang Yuan's mind. He held the fire in his right hand and the water in his left. As the swords combined, a strong and concentrated sword essence exploded like a sun.

"Rumble!"

In the huge explosion, the Divine Lotus Print cracked and crumbled.

"You..."

Meng Lian retreated and there was blood on her lips, which stained her clothing. It was a pitiful scene.

"Die!"

Fang Yuan was determined. Without a sense of pity, he struck another sword out.

"You forced me..."

As she felt her death approaching, Meng Lian quickly pulled a piece of jade from her neck with a fierce look on her face.

"Who dares to harm my lady?"

A loud and powerful voice was heard.

In the piece of jade, there was a glow as the jade started to crazily absorb the elemental energy from the surroundings.

"The magical clone of a powerful person?"

Fang Yuan sighed. He knew that an important lady like Meng Lian would have plenty of protective treasures on her body. Quickly, he came to a decision. "Retreat!"

Chapter 280: Joining the Realm Alliance

"You have the guts to kill the people of my cult! No one will be able to save you!"

A silhouette appeared from the jade. It seemed to be a scholar wearing a crown. The person had a long beard and appeared righteous.

His body was illusionary but it was forming quickly. He pointed at Fang Yuan and shouted, "Destroy!"

"Whoosh!"

There was a bright glow.

In mid-air, runes flashed and quickly flew towards Fang Yuan. Subsequently, they entered his forehead.

"Eh?"

In his actualised dream world, a gigantic word 'Destroy' appeared. As the word glowed, it brought with it the feel of destruction.

This scholar was extremely powerful and wanted to destroy Fang Yuan's spirit!

"8 Gates Sword Array, attack!"

After all, the actualised dream world was Fang Yuan's base. This was where all his power was and of course, he would have the advantage here.

Fang Yuan recalled the techniques of defence from the inheritance of Master Heartless. With a simple thought, the 8 Gates Sword Array shook and 8 sword essences flew up, trapping the glowing word. Smashing it downwards, the word crumbled into powder.

"If this was the real world, I would still not be able to use the 8 Gates Sword Array to its fullest potential. However, I can already

execute the techniques of the array within the actualised dream world. If you are physically here, you might be able to kill me, but now, you are trying to kill me with just your incarnation?"

In the real world, Fang Yuan laughed and flicked his right index finger. Immediately, two swords flew out. "Water-Fire Dual Sword Array, Go!"

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Two streaks of red and blue rose up into the sky and formed a small array which contained the scholar and Meng Lian within.

In the next moment, the water and fire sword essences exploded.

"Ahhh!"

Meng Lian exclaimed as a wound opened up at her chest.

"Guard!"

The scholar had to help his daughter and therefore split his energy to protect her.

There was a glow in his hands and a brush appeared. As he wrote in mid-air, he formed the word 'Guard'.

With a glitter, the word transformed into a shield which protected him and Meng Lian in within.

"Rumble!"

As soon as he completed his technique, a terrifying explosion broke out.

As the dust flew, it covered the sky like a mushroom cloud.

At the place where the explosion occurred, there was now a large hole. The government office was also affected and many were dead, but Fang Yuan was no longer to be seen.

"Adoptive father, why didn't you chase him?"

Meng Lian held her chest and her face was filled with hatred. Suddenly, her expression changed.

There were two sword scars on the scholar's body. His originally half-formed body had now become illusionary as though it would disappear anytime.

"Great sword skills! Great sword array!"

The scholar sighed. "This person is not only in the Illusionary Divine stage but has commendable combat skills. I believe that the only way to defeat him is to use our cult's protective technique. Lian'er, remember, don't be reckless!"

If his true self was here, he wouldn't have let him escape.

But now, there was nothing he could do.

He glanced at the government office which was in tatters and shook his head. "Let's go... If the highly skilled people from Da Qian were to surround us, it would be troublesome!"

"Alright!"

Meng Lian gritted her teeth. She had to admit that the failure of this mission had made her embarrassed.

"Fang Yuan? I'll remember you!"

...

At the outskirts of the district town, in the wilderness.

Fang Yuan spread out his arms like an eagle in flight and rushed out.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Two streaks of light quickly flew towards him and entered his body.

In his actualised dream world, the Leaving Fire Sword and Rough Water Sword returned to their original positions but the glow from them had become dimmer.

"It seems that that scholar is indeed powerful."

Fang Yuan looked down. He quickly transferred his dream

elemental force towards the spiritual swords, repairing them.

This was the advantage of being a dream soldier master.

Even though his weapon might be damaged, all he needed would be some time to repair it, which would be much simpler than when he was forming the swords.

If he could really form the 8 swords and form the sword array, he could attack continuously and the array could be utilised to its maximum potential.

"However... Looking at my current standards now, it seems that I am still no match for the Divine Lotus Cult!"

The killings which he had committed were purely due to the fact that they were looking for him and he had to retaliate. Even if he escaped, he would still be chased by them and therefore, he would rather take the initiative and kill as many enemies as he could.

Now that he had earned himself some time, it was different.

"I shall not return to the Qin Family, since I cannot be certain if I am being followed. Furthermore, looking at the cultivation levels of the Qin Siblings, if I were to get them involved in this, they would probably die like ants being stepped on..."

Fang Yuan came to a decision and decided to run as far as he could.

After all, there were 99 regions in Da Qian! He had been dwelling in the less populated regions and had yet to experience the prosperous lands.

This was the perfect opportunity for him to explore.

"Looking at the hatred the Divine Lotus Sect have with the Imperial Court, I'm sure their influence would be the weakest at the capital..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin. "Of course... It is dangerous for me to be alone. I need to find a backing..."

He arrived at a river and executed the Turtle Aura Technique before freezing the water beneath to form a small icy mountain. He then trapped himself within and dived into the river, allowing the river stream to carry him along.

At the same time, Fang Yuan entered the Dream Realm.

...

"Feng Xinzi!"

He took out his inscription plate and sent out a message.

"Brother, you're just in time. In a day's time, I will prepare for a makeover in preparation for making the pill!"

Feng Xinzi's symbol shook and replied almost instantaneously.
"What's up, brother?"

"I have been targeted by the Divine Lotus Cult. Can I get protection if I join the Realm Alliance?"

Fang Yuan was honest and enquired directly.

"You are interested in joining the Realm Alliance? That's great! Wait for me..."

In the next moment, Feng Xinzi's figure appeared in the Dream Realm with a look of joy on his face. "It is a wise choice to choose us!"

"I hope so!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his nose.

He had a rough understanding of the 5 organisations of the Dream Realm.

The Evil Divine Sect and the Divine Lotus Cult were both evil sects with a bad reputation. On the other hand, there were too many restrictions to join Baize Mountain, while the Source Seeking Sect was filled with crazy people.

Thinking about it, he realised that the Realm Alliance was the

only one with the least restrictions and the least requirements.

"Let me warn you beforehand. Previously, the Divine Lotus Cult had looked for me and we had a big fight. I had even killed some of their people!"

Fang Yuan was honest.

"Brother, you're really... decisive!"

Feng Xinzi let out a bitter laugh and continued. "Are there dream masters among people you have killed?"

"Nope. Only a few Wu Zongs and a spiritual knight. Meng Lian had sustained a few injuries!"

Fang Yuan reported.

"Then that is no problem at all!"

Feng Xinzi sighed. "To the Divine Lotus Cult, Wu Zongs and spiritual knights are just servants and they could easily be replaced by new people. Furthermore, this was the test period of the reserved Divine Lady. Your actions might be welcomed by the other reserved Divine Ladies!"

"However, these reserved Divine Ladies all have a Divine Lotus Print to protect them and other countless magical equipment and yet, you can still hurt her..."

Feng Xinzi nodded his head. "It seems like your abilities are beyond my expectation! Follow me!"

He brought Fang Yuan to a dead end of the Dream Realm.

As the fog dissipated, a green mountain appeared and there seemed to be people on the mountain.

"This is the headquarters of the Realm Alliance in the dream world!"

Feng Xinzi dissipated the pill essence which covered him and brought Fang Yuan along a path of stone steps. Not long after, they

arrived at a stone square.

What surprised Fang Yuan was that there was a similar mission rock tablet in the middle of the square. Words were inscribed on the rock tablet and huge amounts of information flashed across.

"This is a special feature provided by the Realm Spirit to the 5 big organisations. The function of this rock tablet is exactly the same as the one in the Dream Realm. On it are mostly the missions specific to the Realm Alliance. The rewards for the missions here are greater and there are some classified pieces of information provided from the tablet as well, including information regarding the use of karma..."

As Feng Xinzi spoke, he brought Fang Yuan to a rock palace and into a room. "Elder Smelter, greetings to you!"

"Haha... You wouldn't come here without any rhyme or reason. Come in!"

The doors slowly opened by themselves.

It was extremely spacious inside and at the four corners, there were many pools of different colour, including red, purple, blue, green, white... Different coloured flames were burning brilliantly but no heat was felt from the flames.

In the middle of the palace, there was a rock bed and on it was a person crossing his legs. He was a short person and his eyebrows were red. He had a compassionate look and smiled as he saw the both of them.

As he looked at him, Fang Yuan was shocked and could feel that he was being seen through. Immediately, he knew that this person was a high-tiered dream master which was much more powerful than him. "Greetings, senior!"

"Fang Yuan, Venerable Smelter is the elder of the Realm Alliance. He is at the 7th Tier of the Illusionary Divine stage!"

At Fang Yuan's ears, he could hear Feng Xinzi's voice as he

introduced to him the person in front.

Although the 7th Tier Illusionary Divine stage was not the Prominent Divine Stage yet, the combat powers were similar! He was a powerful person, even among everyone in Da Qian Empire.

"Keke, no need for formalities. You are Fang Yuan, and you wish to join the alliance?"

Elder Smelter chuckled. "You're good! You're not even 30 and yet you have already achieved the 2nd Tier of the Illusionary Divine stage, hmm... You have the vibes of a magical soldier. Are you on the path to becoming a dream soldier master?"

"That's right! Elder Smelter, you're good!"

Fang Yuan bowed and replied.

At this point in time, Feng Xinzi started to explain the situation Fang Yuan was in. Elder Smelter laughed. "It's just a few slaves of the Divine Lotus Cult! That's nothing... our Realm Alliance is still capable of giving you protection from them. As for Lin Qianye from the Thousand Year Mountain... Hehe, this person is crazy! He even dared to kill a dream master previously. He is just seeking his death! Little Fang, don't you worry. It is a coincidence that I am in the North. Wait for me and I shall help you take your revenge!"

Venerable Smelter had a personality similar to fire. As he exclaimed, he looked at Fang Yuan, impressed.

"Considering your age and cultivation, you are indeed a talent. If you join the Realm Alliance, you can have the rights of Two Leaves. Feng Xinzi, see that it is done!"

"Yes, Sir!"

Both of them took a bow once more and were dismissed from the hall.

Chapter 281: Revenge

"Haha... Brother Fang, you're really lucky that Elder Smelter admires you!"

As soon as they walked out of the hall, Feng Xinzi congratulated Fang Yuan. "From today onwards, we will be an alliance. Remember to look out for each other!"

He felt that Fang Yuan was his lucky star and it was fate that they met each other.

After knowing Fang Yuan, he not only obtained large amounts of rare spiritual plants, he also had the karma flower now.

"Please guide me along with your invaluable experience!"

Fang Yuan knew that although the Realm Alliance was not as strict, there were different factions within the alliance. Elder Smelter and Feng Xinzi were of a faction and now, Fang Yuan was part of it too.

Of course, it was a good thing that someone was there to guide him through as soon as he joined the alliance and therefore, he would not reject the help given.

"Of course!"

Feng Xinzi quickly agreed. "The requirements to enter the Realm Alliance is the least. The only thing we ask of you is not to betray the alliance and not to fight against our fellow alliance mates. Also, you just have to complete a mission every once in a while. You will sign an agreement with the witness of the Realm Spirit and anyone who breaks the agreement will be hunted down by every dream master alive and will be denied entry into the Dream Realm!"

He explained in detail and Fang Yuan gained more understanding of the organisation structure and the powers in the Realm Alliance.

Since the Realm Alliance was formed from scattered groups of

dream masters in the past, there were no sects and physical headquarters; everything was in the Dream Realm.

In the alliance, the ones with the most power were the Elders Association. It was known that the association was formed by a group of 7th Tier Illusionary Divine dream masters. There was an official Alliance Leader who had already entered the Prominent Divine Stage and was the heart of the Realm Alliance.

Below them were cultivators ranked from 1st Leaf to 7th Leaf, and the varying ranks would have different levels of authority and treatment.

A normal dream master who just joined the alliance would have to start as a 1st Leaf Cultivator and complete missions to rise up the ranks.

Fang Yuan had directly entered a faction and was admired by an Elder. Therefore, he was directly conferred the rank of a 2nd Leaf Cultivator without much effort.

"The higher the rank of a cultivator, the greater the chances to accept missions of high rewards and the greater the authority to browse through top-secret documents..."

Feng Xinzi brought Fang Yuan to the square and in front of the rock tablet. "The top of this tablet is the official binding document of the Realm Alliance. You can simply call for the Realm Spirit to witness your signing!"

Fang Yuan looked towards the top of the tablet. Indeed, there was a row of small golden words. These words described the agreement of the Realm Alliance and they were indeed less uptight and strict than the other alliances. With a nod of his head, he called for the Realm Spirit.

"Ding! You've been verified! Let the Realm Spirit take care of the rest!"

After a mechanic bell rang, the inscription plate around his waist

flew up. In a flash, there was a new row of golden inscriptions on it.

"This is the rights to enter this place and use this rock tablet. Congratulations, brother! When you first use the rock tablet of the Realm Alliance, your rank will automatically be updated to a 2nd Leaf Cultivator!"

Feng Xinzi smiled.

'Is it that simple?'

Fang Yuan was shocked. The Realm Alliance was indeed a carefree alliance, judging by how his initiation took place.

"Alright, the disciples of Elder Smelter will look for you for the other matters! I'll be on my way to continue my alchemy!"

Feng Xinzi took out his inscription plate and swiped it on the rock tablet. With a look of joy on his face, he quickly disappeared.

"It must be another mission to bring in a newcomer!"

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes but knew that in order to join the alliance, he had to let Feng Xinzi get the longer end of the stick and therefore didn't mind. After which, he placed his inscription plate on the rock tablet.

"Di! Welcome, Cultivator Fang Yuan!"

Many pieces of information flowed out. They were classified into different sections, namely rewards, missions, techniques and secret news. The first piece of information was a congratulatory message from the Realm Spirit.

"Due to the authority of Elder Smelter, you have directly gained the rank of a 2nd Leaf Cultivator. You can straightaway accept missions of 2nd Tier difficulty and below and can browse through a part of the information bank!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. "It is a good idea to classify missions into tiers so that dream masters will not die in the mission just

because they are under-skilled..."

His scanned through everything quickly and found the description regarding karma. It was similar to what Feng Xinzi had described to him, just more generic.

However, there were only pieces of information about people dao karma and none about heavenly karma. It seemed that his authority was not enough to view more information.

'Hehe... This is a good way to motivate the dream masters to serve the alliance so as to rise up the ranks to see more classified information...'

'Of course, this is happening everywhere. As long as they don't take too much advantage of the low-tiered dream masters and don't keep them within the low ranks for too long, it would be alright. Instead, as the low-tiered dream masters rise up the ranks, they would proactively respect the confidentiality of these pieces of information and the system would be able to operate smoothly!'

Fang Yuan snickered and found the piece of information which he needed:

"The different tiers in the Illusionary Divine stage are defined based on the things that are actualised. In every 3 Tiers, a huge breakthrough will be required! The 4th Tier of the Illusionary Divine stage would require the dream master to create something from nothing and actualise a spiritual property in objects!"

The spiritual property would be referring to pill spirits and equipment spirits. The objects would have a spirit and a mind but would be unable to replicate on its own.

Feng Xinzi was at the 3rd Tier of the Illusionary Divine stage. If he were to be successful in creating a pill spirit, he would have broken through to the 4th Tier.

Even to Fang Yuan, it would be an extremely arduous task to form the 4th sword.

At this stage, every magical sword would have their own sword spirit and would be able to form the 4 Emblems Sword Array. It would have half the power of the 8 Gates Sword Array and was something to be feared.

"The 7th Tier of Illusionary Divine would allow one to create a race and actualise a small piece of spiritual land!"

A race would refer to a heritage of living things able to take care of themselves and self-populate in the wild.

Reading up to here, Fang Yuan was deep in his own thoughts.

If his guess was right, his master, Master Heartless, should be at this stage.

In Da Qian, this level of cultivation would be comparable to the martial arts Divine Body and spiritual knights in the True Elemental Realm. They would be able to rule over an area with their might.

There was only a line of description for the Prominent Divine Stage. "Able to create people! Able to create an ecosystem! The creator of all!"

"Oh, the race which was described in the 7th Tier Illusionary Divine Stage did not include people! Does the difference lie in the wisdom of humans?"

Fang Yuan made an educated guess.

Dream masters below the level of Prominent Divine Stage could only actualise animals or even humans with simple thoughts. However, they were unable to create an entire sentient race!

Just by this point alone, dream masters in the Prominent Divine Stage deserved the title of 'Divine'. This was why the Imperial Court of Da Qian had to fear the dream masters.

Fang Yuan roughly understood why the dream masters of Da Qian could feel a sense of superiority here.

It was not just the difference in powers; dream masters were on an entirely new level. As a creator of things, how would the dream masters compare themselves to the things that they could create?

"Cultivator Fang Yuan, my master invites you!"

Just as Fang Yuan was carried away by his own thoughts, a small child in red robes came to him and bowed.

"You are..."

Looking at the child, he could see through the disguise and realised that it was not a real child, but a fiery dragon.

"I am Fiery Dragon, the subordinate of Elder Smelter!"

The child replied respectfully.

"Since that is so, please lead the way!"

Fang Yuan looked at the back of the child and was lost in his thoughts.

The Fiery Dragon was likely to be created by Elder Smelter. Although his actions were no different from a normal human, it was not able to reproduce. Therefore, it could only be created by a dream master and was therefore not considered a race.

"Haha..... Fang Yuan, come over here!"

It was the same hall. Elder Smelter smiled and invited Fang Yuan over.

"You have joined our alliance! That's good!"

He stroked his beard and continued. "I have just talked to the elders of the Divine Lotus Sect. They will not hold you accountable for killing a few servants. However, you have to defend yourself in the event a dream master of similar cultivation comes to you for revenge! After all, it is the testing period for the reserved Divine Ladies. If they can kill you, they will be heavily credited for it!"

"Thank you, Elder!"

Fang Yuan bowed and thanked him sincerely.

He was not at all worried about the fact that a dream master of similar cultivation would seek him for revenge.

'It is indeed different after I have a backing! Of course, the good thing is that this Elder Smelter is very protective. It seems like the right choice to join this faction..."

"Alright, my physical body has already arrived at Victorious East Region. Let's meet at the foot of Thousand Year Mountain!"

This came as a shock to Fang Yuan.

"Thousand Year Mountain?"

"Of course! Does Lin Qianye really think that he can get away with it after killing dream masters?"

Elder Smelter waved his hands. "The previous dream master had no backing and was indeed a little overboard. Therefore, he deserved it. However, ultimately, as a martial artist, you cannot just simply kill a dream master! And don't forget your encounter with him as well! We need to let them know that there is retribution in this world!"

Elder Smelter was indeed an aggressive person. With a snicker, he continued. "I want to see how Venerable Longhu can protect Lin Qianye!"

Fang Yuan remained silent.

A dream master could afford to be overbearing!

...

Thousand Year Mountain.

Ruan Junxian was practising his martial arts and appeared focused.

There was a layer of sweat on his forehead but he did not mind and continued to practise.

Since the previous incident, he had decided to put in more effort in practising his martial arts.

Although Ruan Ming was rescued in the end, it was a disgraceful incident for the Ruan Family. Even though Lin Qianye had promised the family that he would kill the dream master, there was no news of it, which made the entire family depressed.

Finally, they realised that Fang Yuan was only after them for the martial arts technique. However, none of them was willing to admit that they were enemies with Fang Yuan. After this incident, they might seek revenge in the future.

To experience such an unfortunate event in a single day was embarrassing, especially for such a big family like the Ruan Family.

The cause behind all that had happened was a single dream master!

"I must train hard! To achieve a breakthrough to Wu Zong!"

After executing a series of techniques, Ruan Junxian finally stopped and clenched his fists. "From the tests I did when I was younger, I know that my magic abilities were only average. However, after breaking through to Wu Zong, my magic would increase and from there, I can try to cultivate in spiritual spells! However, it's still a pity that I will not be able to become a dream master..."

A spiritual knight had a higher status than Wu Zong but was nothing compared to a dream master.

The strict requirements to be a dream master left many unqualified.

"... However, if I become like the Vice Sect Head with top-notch martial arts, I can still kill dream masters easily. Hmm... what path should I choose in the future?"

Lin Qianye walked back and forth, deep in thought.

"Han Longhu, come out!"

A loud voice was heard as though thunder roared, and Ruan Junxian was shocked. "Who would dare to call the sect head by his full name? Is he crazy?"

Chapter 282: Death Fight

"Roar! Roar!"

After a few roars, many thick fiery dragons appeared in mid-air and spat our flames towards the mountain.

There was an immense amount of energy in every fiery dragon and after a few moments, the entire Thousand Year Mountain was set on fire.

Black smoke filled the sky and it was as though doomsday was approaching.

"Retreat!"

Seeing this, Ruan Junxian had no intentions of fighting. With the other disciples, he ran towards the headquarters of the Thousand Year Mountain.

This was the power of the heavens! It was not something that humans could go against!

"Roar! Roar!"

The few dragons flew around lazily and slowly shrunk in size. Although they were shrunk, they were still over 30 feet long and were still majestic beasts. On the head of one of the dragons, there were two people.

Witnessing this scene, Fang Yuan broke out in cold sweat.

The fiery dragons were setting everything into a burning inferno but he could feel no heat from where he was standing. This was the perfect control of powers on the part of Elder Smelter, which was indeed impressive.

This was the power of a 7th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master!

Never would Fang Yuan have guessed that Elder Smelter would be so reckless. They had only met moments before Elder Smelter

launched an attack against the Thousand Year Mountain.

The entire Thousand Year Mountain would be reduced to ashes if Venerable Longhu was not around!

"Hmph... I'm not even burning down a city. This is merely a mountain! I'll like to see who can stop me!"

Elder Smelter waved his hands majestically.

"Fiery Dragon Child, burn this place down!"

His voice roared across the entire Thousand Year Mountain.

"Yes, Sir!"

A child's voice was heard from all three dragons. Suddenly, the dragons flew up and circled the mountain, spitting fire in the process.

"What?"

Ruan Junxian was confused as he hid among the fellow disciples. From the shout, he could feel pain in his ears and he almost fainted. "Where did this demon come from? How dare he destroy our sect!"

"This person can control fire dragons and use their spiritual awareness to his advantage. I'm afraid he's a dream master!"

The Black Tiger Taisui, He Shantong, had more experience and could vaguely know what was happening. There was a look of despair on his face. "This person is a high-tiered dream master as well! Other than our sect head, no one can stand a chance against him!"

"Dream master!"

Ruan Junxian turned pale and his legs went jelly. "Could it be that they are still after my family?"

"You think too highly of yourself. Do you think they will need such a powerful dream master to wipe out your family?"

He Shantong chuckled and for the first time felt that this disciple of his was causing too much trouble. "I'm afraid that they are after the sect this time, hmm... Vice Sect Head!"

At this stage, even He Shantong was like an ant and could not do anything to help the situation.

Under the burning inferno, even a Meridian Opening Wu Zong would be reduced to ashes!

"Ah..."

In the sect head's hall in Thousand Year Mountain.

A person was wearing robes with dragons and tigers sewn on it. As he placed his hands behind his back, another person was kneeling down behind him. It was Lin Qianye.

"Qianye, do you know where you've gone wrong?"

This was the sect head of Thousand Year Mountain, Venerable Longhu. He was 13th in the Dragon Ranks and had already condensed the Divine Body.

"I should not have recklessly chased after that dream master!"

Lin Qianye scoffed. "Why didn't he bring out his backing before? This is frustrating!"

"Sigh... You still don't know where you've gone wrong! This is not the source of the trouble! It was the fact that you previously killed a dream master. Our Thousand Year Mountain is a small sect. Why kill the dream master out of frustration? Do you know why other people are not willing to kill dream masters? They are all waiting for others to do so....."

Venerable Longhu sighed. "It's partially my fault for not being stricter with the rules. Because of this, you have become too proud of yourself. You need to know that the world is huge and even having the Divine Body, I have to think twice before acting!"

"Brother!"

Suddenly, Lin Qianye stood up and walked forward. "What do I have to fear? I will only die at most!"

"Don't be stupid!"

Venerable Longhu waved his sleeves and Lin Qianye could not help it but took 3 steps backwards. Although he had already formed 8 spiritual meridians with the Kurong Mysterious Technique, he was still nothing compared to a True Divine.

"As the sect head of Thousand Year Mountain, how can I not shoulder the responsibility?"

Venerable Longhu looked at the flames in mid-air and took a step out.

"Rumble!"

On his body, a surge of energy condensed and transformed into the figures of a dragon and a tiger. "Who are you and why are you here?"

The voice was no weaker than that from Elder Smelter as it spread throughout the mountain.

"Chi!"

As the vibrations from the voice swept through the flames, they were extinguished immediately.

"This is the power of a True Divine!"

"You're impressive, sect head!"

As the few disciples witness their sect head taking action, they cheered loudly.

"Remain where you are and don't come out!"

Venerable Longhu shouted once more as he quickly made his way to the top of the mountain to engage the dream master.

"Is this a True Divine with a Divine Body?"

Although Venerable Longhu only glanced at Fang Yuan for a split

second, Fang Yuan could feel that his dream elemental force came to a halt and at that moment, he was speechless.

He knew that if he were to fight Venerable Longhu, even after using his killer moves, he would be finished off with a single punch without a doubt!

"A True Divine martial artist will be able to use their pure energy to condense it into power and hurt someone without even touching them! This is godly!"

Seeing the dragon and tiger beside Venerable Longhu, Fang Yuan slowly understood.

"Hehe... Venerable Longhu, you're finally here! Give me Lin Qianye and kill him in front of me and I shall forget all this, otherwise... I will make the Thousand Year Mountain cease to exist!"

Elder Smelter exclaimed loudly.

He wanted to directly destroy the entire sect!

Although Venerable Longhu had a good temper, there was a hint of anger on his face. Holding it in, he looked at Fang Yuan. "Are you the dream master who attacked the Ruan Family?"

"Not attack, but merely collecting debts!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and appeared insistent.

"Alright... I'll apologise on behalf of my Vice Sect Head!"

Venerable Longhu gave a respectful bow. "Please forgive Lin Qianye this time. We'll reward you in the future! If you have any requests, the Thousand Year Mountain will accede to it!"

"This..."

Fang Yuan was tempted to accept his offer.

After all, it was good to establish good relations with a True Divine martial artist. However, it was a pity that he was not in the

position to make the decision as he looked over to Elder Smelter.

"Hehe... It's too late for regrets!"

Elder Smelter was unforgiving. "That brother of yours didn't just chase Fang Yuan. How should we settle the score the previous time he killed a dream master?"

With this, Fang Yuan closed his eyes. He knew that there was no longer a chance for a peaceful resolution.

His heart shivered.

'Elder Smelter seems righteous on the outside but he is actually scheming! Firstly, he wants to demonstrate his power on Thousand Year Mountain! Secondly, he wants me to offend the True Divine and be loyal to him! This is indeed a good plot, but it's too cruel!'

"What do you think?"

Indeed, Venerable Longhu felt that there was no room for discussion as gave off a cold expression.

This was only a high-tiered dream master, and he had the cultivation of a True Divine himself. He stood a chance against this dream master.

"Hehe... It seems that you will not fear until you've seen the coffin!"

Elder Smelter waved his hands "Three Suns Dragons, Go!"

"Yes, Sir!"

As a child's voice responded, the 3 dragons expanded and roared.

"Hmph! Dragon Tiger Massacre!"

As Venerable Longhu leapt backwards, the figures of the dragon and tiger leapt into him, allowing him to form the silhouette of a giant.

The silhouette was extremely clear. It stood tall like a god and

there were imprints of dragons and tigers on his body. As the muscles on his body contracted, he looked up towards the sky and struck a punch out.

"Bang!"

There was a loud explosion and the entire Thousand Year Mountain shook.

As the two most powerful people in the vicinity struck, the power that they had generated could potentially destroy an entire city. How could the mountain take the stress?

"Crumble!"

As Giant Longhu took two steps backwards, the buildings crumbled and there were cries and blood spurting everywhere.

"You are... Smelter of the Realm Alliance?"

In the next moment, Venerable Longhu dispersed his Divine Body and smiled, for he had identified the dream master.

"That's right!"

As the fiery dragons exploded, Elder Smelter waved his sleeves and released his dream elemental force. Within seconds, 9 similar dragons appeared. "How's that? Do you want to continue?"

"If you are willing to stop, I will be eternally grateful for that. But if you insist, I can only defend with all my life! The spirit of a martial artist is to never give up!"

Venerable Longhu replied decisively.

Even a 9th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master would have to think twice if a True Divine were to fight with all his life.

'Elder Smelter will not risk his life for me. If I'm not wrong, he should be thinking about something else...'

Fang Yuan watched from the sidelines and thought to himself.

Indeed, in the next moment, Elder Smelter started to laugh.

"Alright, how about both of us take a step back? Let Lin Qianye come out and fight Fang Yuan to their deaths. Both of us shall not interfere and after the fight, we're even. How's that?"

"That's a good idea!"

As Venerable Longhu was deciding, a silhouette rushed out. It was Lin Qianye.

He looked at Fang Yuan and was full of confidence.

After all, he had managed to chase him down. That was only a few months before, so what could change?

"Second Brother!"

Venerable Longhu glared at him.

"Big Brother, if we do not settle it like this, what other choices will we have?"

Lin Qianye voice was softly heard in Venerable Longhu's ears. "Even if I die, I can still protect Thousand Year Mountain!"

"Alright!"

Venerable Longhu finally agreed with tears in his eyes.

Lin Qianye laughed and walked forward as he looked at Fang Yuan. "Please!"

'This Elder Smelter just trapped me?'

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes. However, he felt something in his sleeves and heard Elder Smelter's voice in his mind. "Just go ahead with the fight. If you think you can no longer continue, just throw this out. I've hidden a fiery dragon in it. Burn him down!"

After all, Elder Smelter only wanted Fang Yuan to become enemies with Thousand Year Mountain and to be loyal to him. Therefore, he wouldn't let him die. Although this was cheating, Venerable Longhu did not detect anything. It was a scarily impressive move.

Chapter 283: Ups and Downs

"Please!"

It was also Fang Yuan's wish to be able to fight with Lin Qianye once more.

The people of Thousand Year Mountain crept out of their hiding spots to watch, although they were given the order to hide.

It was a rare opportunity to spectate a death match between a highly-skilled martial artist and a highly-skilled dream master.

"Whoosh!"

A Leaving Fire Sword appeared in Fang Yuan's hands and the flames burnt brilliantly. "Have you regretted what you've done?"

"Regret? You dream masters are a poisonous tumour to society! The only regret I have is killing too few of you!"

Lin Qianye laughed. "Even if I die killing you, it will be worth it!"

It seemed that Lin Qianye knew of his predicament.

If he were to lose, he would die.

Even if he were to win and kill Fang Yuan, Elder Smelter wouldn't let him go!

Death was his only option and therefore, the best outcome for him was to die together with Fang Yuan.

This was how pitiful it was to be part of the weaker force!

"Alright, it is only times like this that I can hear what you truly feel!"

Fang Yuan smiled and struck his sword out. The sword essence of the Leaving Fire Sword exploded.

"Lin Qianye is indeed crazy! Nothing could save him!"

Elder Smelter glared at Venerable Longhu. "Is this how you teach

your disciples?"

"Of course not!"

Venerable Longhu was stunned. He could feel the death wish from Lin Qianye!

Inside, he sighed. Lin Qianye's parents were killed by dream masters and the love of his life was abducted by a dream master as well. All of these had led to the change in his personality.

"This is just sword essence!"

8 spiritual meridians appeared behind Lin Qianye's back as he rushed forward. "Thousand Leaves Palm!"

"Whoosh!"

Both his hands released elemental force and turned translucent. With continuous strikes, he extinguished the sword essence.

"Kurong Double Posture-Killing the Devil!"

As a Wu Zong with 8 spiritual meridians, he was just one step to forming the Divine Body and become a True Divine.

With a flash, Lin Qianye quickly arrived in front of Fang Yuan and sliced down with his hands.

Behind him, the 8 spiritual meridians came together to form a figure, half of which appeared wilted and the other half healthy. With this, his body was strengthened.

This was putting all of his strength in one strike, preparing to kill Fang Yuan in a single blow!

"Impressive!"

If Fang Yuan was a normal dream master, he would have been stunned by the spiritual aura of the Kurong Mysterious Technique. With a split second of hesitation, he would probably be killed on the spot.

But Fang Yuan was not only a dream master, he was also a Wu

Zong!

His thoughts ran quickly as a dim golden glow emitted from his body. The 4 spiritual meridians behind his back quickly formed a spiritual armour as he retreated.

At the same time, in his left hand, a blue Water Sword appeared as well. "Water-Fire Dual Sword Array! Kill!"

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Streaks of red and blue sword essence trapped Lin Qianye at where he was before exploding.

"Oh? You've achieved a breakthrough? No wonder you dare to fight against me! How can such a dual-sword array be so powerful?"

Lin Qianye shook and could feel a pressure within him. He finally realised that the person in front of him was a worthy opponent and he had to focus.

"Buzz! Buzz!"

The Kurong Figure assimilated into his back and spiritual inscriptions appeared on his body. Even half of his face started to dry up and appeared as though it was wilting.

Although his appearance was disfigured, his body became extremely strong. As the sword essence landed on his body, only pelting sounds were heard.

'Brother, you have finally improved...'

Seeing this scene, Venerable Longhu sighed.

If Lin Qianye could survive the fight, he could possibly condense the Divine Body after 3 years of meditation and arrive at the peak of martial arts!

However, all breakthroughs would require an immense amount of resources.

Even though he might break through to the next stage, his cultivation would not immediately follow.

Witnessing the fight, Elder Smelter started to feel increasingly aggressive.

"Die!"

Lin Qianye roared like a beast, but all his moves were to perfection as he forced Fang Yuan to his limits.

"Hmm... It seems like sword essence alone would not be able to kill you."

Fang Yuan struck his swords out continuously like a river stream.

Although Lin Qianye was immune to the weaker sword essences, the main sword essence could still hurt him. Therefore, the physical body of the magical soldiers would surely be able to kill him.

After a series of exchanges, there were a few bloodied scars on Lin Qianye and his expression became increasingly frenzied.

"Magical Technique of Burning Blood!"

He roared as his skin exploded. Instantly, he became a bloodied person and resisted all the sword essences before arriving before Fang Yuan. "Die!"

"Water and Fire, strike together!"

Fang Yuan clenched his teeth and struck both swords out. A slight rumbling of thunder was heard.

"Whoosh!"

The ground shook and the dust flew.

Venerable Longhu sighed and Elder Smelter seemed worried.

"Great... I finally died in your hands..."

Lin Qianye looked at the sword in his hands and had a mixed expression.

After finishing his sentence, his forehead exploded, revealing a charred scar inflicted by a sword. He fell to the ground, motionless.

'The Water-Fire Dual Sword Array is on par with you. The final thunder-type sword essence made the difference...'

Fang Yuan wiped the blood on his mouth, turned around and faced Elder Smelter. "Fortunately, I did not disgrace the dream masters!"

"Great! This is great!"

Elder Smelter retrieved his fiery dragon, but Fang Yuan could not guess what he was thinking.

"You have returned victorious but you are injured. Have a good rest!"

His expression returned to normal as he looked towards Venerable Longhu. "Since the culprit is dead, we shall take our leave..."

Venerable Longhu was expressionless as he looked at Lin Qianye's corpse.

Seeing this, Fang Yuan sighed. He knew that they would be enemies for a long time to come and there was nothing he could do to establish good relations with them.

"Let's go!"

Elder Smelter chuckled and led the way while Fang Yuan followed behind.

If not for the protection from Elder Smelter, the entire Thousand Year Mountain would tear him apart alive.

...

After a long while, the unforgiving sun rays landed on Venerable Longhu. He was motionless like a statue in the wind.

"Sect head?"

A few elders came out with worried looks on their face.

"Forget it. Bury Qianye and let him... rest in peace!"

Venerable Longhu waved his hands and as he finished his sentence, he almost choked on his words.

"Yes, sect head!"

A few deacons and disciples came out and cleared the mess.

Looking in the direction where Elder Smelter had left, Venerable Longhu was in a daze. Finally, he returned to the building. "I want to meditate in seclusion. Don't disturb me!"

...

"This... This is the power of dream masters! Is this person against our family?"

Ruan Junxian looked at the tattered battlefield and Lin Qianye's corpse, not knowing what to do.

Lin Qianye was the pride of the sect, a highly skilled martial artist with 8 spiritual meridians and was a single step away from condensing the Divine Body. But now, he was killed by Fang Yuan. This was a severe setback for Ruan Junxian.

He felt that even if he were to reach the cultivation level of Lin Qianye, he would still be easily killed by the dream master's single strike of the sword.

Furthermore, in the time that he would take to reach the 8th spiritual meridian, how far ahead would his opponent be?

Their vast difference was discouraging.

"Junxian!"

At this point in time, a few disciples surrounded him with aggressive looks.

As the crowd gave way, the Black Tiger Taisui, He Shantong

came.

"Master!"

Ruan Junxian felt even more uncomfortable but forcefully raised his head up to look at his master in the eye.

"You... sigh. Although it is not your fault, it is a fact that all of this started with your family. I'm afraid the Thousand Year Mountain cannot let you stay..."

Ruan Junxian turned pale and took a few steps backwards.
"Master.... You..."

He felt a sharp pain in his heart.

He knew that none of them wanted to get implicated and therefore wanted to chase him out of the sect!

Thinking about how much he had offered his master in the past years, there was a burning sensation in his chest.

However, he could only clench his teeth. If he were to display his dissatisfaction, he might get himself killed.

"I can no longer be your master!"

He Shantong sighed. "From today onwards, we shall cut our ties. Leave the mountain!"

"Master!"

At this point in time, a young martial artist stood out. "Although he is being chased out, he still has martial arts which belong to the Thousand Year Mountain!"

Ruan Junxian glanced at him but had no energy to rebut.

Previously, this young martial artist appeared respectful to Ruan Junxian but now, who would've thought that he would turn his back on him!

"That's right, we need to strip him of his martial arts!"

"Master, you're too kind. Why are you only chasing him out? If

you ask me, I believe we should kill him..."

...

There were only a few who would be willing to help him, but countless others who were trying to make things worse for him.

Seeing this scene, Ruan Junxian wanted to laugh.

Where had these loyal disciples gone to when trouble arrived at the sect?

After all, they feared those that were powerful and some of them even had the thoughts of changing sides and siding the dream masters.

"That's not appropriate. After all, Junxian had known martial arts before he entered the sect, and... the Ruan Family is still here!"

He Shantong twitched his eyebrows and shook his head. "Go!"

"Thank you master... and everyone else!"

Ruan Junxian stumbled on his way down the mountain like a zombie.

Thinking about the times where he was considered a talent, and the good times with his fellow sect mates, tears started to well up in his eyes.

"Haha... Haha..."

Arriving at a small cave in the mountain, he tried to cry but instead, he started to laugh heartily.

"Who would've thought that I, Ruan Junxian, would end up like this... Haha! If not for my family, I wouldn't even be able to keep my martial arts!"

"Haha... dream masters are bullies and Heaven is blind! Blind!"

As he was wallowing in despair, something miraculous happened in his body.

"Whooo!"

Elemental energy started to flow like a spiral.

There was a distinct popping sound coming from his Dantian.

"Is this... Have I achieved a breakthrough?"

Ruan Junxian was shocked but composed himself. "Have I achieved the breakthrough which I've been dreaming about all day? Am I a Wu Zong now?"

If this was earlier, he would be overjoyed.

But now, he could only smile. Even with a True Divine, the Thousand Year Mountain could not protect Lin Qianye. How would they be able to protect him?

Chapter 284: Delivery Mission

In the mountains, by the river.

Elemental force surged around in Ruan Junxian's hands and he could control it like his limbs.

"I have finally achieved the realm of Wu Zong!"

There were mixed expressions on his face. "If I had achieved the breakthrough earlier, I can become the protector of the mountains. By then, if they want to chase me out, they will still need the approval from 70 percent of the elders and the approval of the sect head... With this, I have a chance to stay and things wouldn't escalate to this stage... What a pity!"

However, Ruan Junxian was not confident of breaking through to Wu Zong if not for the happenings and his fluctuating emotions.

"Regardless, it is rare to harness elemental force. If I join the Imperial Court of Da Qian, I can become an official and might even have special treatment since I am young. I would think that I would be conferred the appointment of an Eagle Lieutenant..."

As a person coming from an influential family, Ruan Junxian was extremely familiar with the hierarchy. "However, after entering the military, I would be bounded by more restrictions..."

His largest obstacle was Fang Yuan; like a humongous mountain, Fang Yuan was a shadow in his mind.

"That high-tiered dream master is likely to have overlooked me. Therefore, the Ruan Family can still survive... As the Young master, the only thing I can do for the family is to search for a strong backing for the family!"

Ruan Junxian's eyes were burning with passion. "The best would be for me to become a dream master myself and subsequently join the 5 powerful organisations. If that were to happen, the Ruan Family would become the most powerful family in the Victorious

East Region!"

He knew that the world was unfair and only dream masters belonged to the higher levels of cultivation world.

Any influential family would surely have a powerful dream master to back them up.

If any family wanted to become more powerful, they would have to spend fortunes trying to train a dream master from their family before they could progress to have the rights to fight with other families.

Furthermore, even the Imperial Court had employed a large number of dream masters known as the 'Hidden Dragon Guards'. Otherwise, they could not have ruled over the 99 regions so smoothly.

"Now that my magical abilities have been improved, I can start to cultivate in spiritual spells. However, I am still a little short in becoming a dream master..."

There was a look of depression on Ruan Junxian's face.

A dream master was not only unparalleled in fights, they could create life and was the number 1 profession. Unfortunately, the requirements to become a dream master was too high and it was too hard.

However, all hope was not lost.

For instance... a few natural treasures were rumoured to be able to strengthen the foundation of a Wu Zong and initiate the path to become a dream master.

"Forget it... After all, there are a few Meridian Opening Elders at home maintaining peace and order. There is no need for my presence at home. Why not explore the lands in search of opportunities? I can strengthen myself at the same time!"

Ruan Junxian came to a decision. Looking back at Thousand Year

Mountain for one last time, he turned around and walked away.

The world was ever-changing and even a dream future master would not be able to accurately predict the future with complete certainty.

Even as an ant, he had to strengthen himself and believe that he will become powerful one day!

...

"Fang Yuan, how are you feeling?"

A fiery dragon flew around and roared. Mingling in the skies, it was like a deity.

On its back, Elder Smelter looked at Fang Yuan.

"Impressive!"

Fang Yuan sighed softly.

Below them was a small city.

The Fiery Dragon had spirituality and was playful. As it peered through the clouds and revealed its claws, the city dwellers started to panic and hide like ants.

A spiritual light started to glow on the city walls and in the government office, and many archers readied their bows.

"Haha!"

Elder Smelter was overjoyed. "That's right... This is the majestic power!"

He pointed at the people and laughed. "We dream masters are equivalent to gods in the ancient times! How would mortals ever understand our power?"

"The few of you, don't go too overboard! Although the Da Qian is ordinary, it would be troublesome if the 'Hidden Dragon Guards' were to come!"

Elder Smelter had a proud look as he commented, but his face

twitched the moment he mentioned the 'Hidden Dragon Guards'

"Oh? Please explain to me, Elder! How does the Hidden Dragon Guards compare with the Realm Alliance?"

Fang Yuan became interested.

"Hmph! Just a few lackeys that depend on the humans for survival. How can they compare to the Realm Alliance? If you see any Hidden Dragon Guard, just kill them!"

"If not for them, hehe... I'm afraid that the Imperial Court would be destroyed by the crazy people from Source Seeking Sect!"

Elder Smelter looked away; it was evident that he did want to continue with this topic.

As for Fang Yuan, he was deep in thought.

"To keep two evil sects and one crazy sect at bay must mean that the Hidden Dragon Guards are rather powerful! They might be on par with the 5 powerful organisations. Since they have the support of the Imperial Court, they should be quite powerful! But... What made the Source Seeking Sect go against the Imperial Court?"

As he thought about it, he subconsciously spoke his mind.

"Hehe... There's nothing surprising as to what that bunch of crazy people can do!"

Elder Smelter knew that he had said something wrong and did not want to reveal more.

"Alright, where do you intend to stay next?"

Elder Smelter changed the topic and asked Fang Yuan.

"I have been cultivation in seclusion. For now, I want to explore Da Qian and visit the capital!"

Fang Yuan spoke the truth but hid his intentions. This was a small trick that he used. After all, he was speaking before a high-tiered dream master who would be sensitive in detecting his tone

and emotions.

But now, Elder Smelter could not detect anything fishy. "I need to return. After killing the evil water dragon in Sand Region, I have obtained 3 drops of 'Mysterious Elemental Heavy Water' and I can use them to perform alchemy. Since you have the intention to explore the place, help me with something!"

"Please instruct me. I'll do anything!"

Fang Yuan heaved a sigh of relief and replied.

"Help me deliver an item to the Middle Region since the capital is in the Middle Region as well..."

Elder Smelter took out a small red sword. "Take this sword and bring it to Tianmu Mountain in Middle Region. Ask to see the owner of the mountain and pass this sword to the owner... Don't worry, you won't be doing this for nothing. I will officially assign you this mission in the Dream Realm!"

This mission was assignment-typed and the rewards were not good, but it would count a lot towards his contribution to the Realm Alliance.

"I will do it!"

Fang Yuan took the sword over from Elder Smelter. The red sword which was previously glowing died down in its brilliance as soon as it entered Fang Yuan's hand; it was like a normal sword now.

"Alright, be on your way!"

Elder Smelter waved his sleeves and immediately, Fang Yuan could feel a huge force pushing against him; it was akin to a small boat being pushed by a tsunami. As soon as he realised what had happened, he was already on a small hill on the outskirts of a county town.

"This is the power of a 7th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master!"

Looking at the busy and prosperous county town, Fang Yuan sighed. Without wasting time, he quickly disappeared into the forest.

...

"The journey to Middle Region is long and therefore, I need to make some plans..."

Fang Yuan was neutral about the mission.

He was only a newbie among the dream masters and would not suspect that Elder Smelter would try to harm him by assigning him this mission.

Of course, he had to be wary of the small sword and had to seal its energy up. This was not guarding against Elder Smelter but rather, it was merely being careful.

After finding a secluded spot, he entered the Dream Realm and indeed, on his inscription plate, there was a new ongoing mission. It was assigned by Elder Smelter and after browsing through the details, he could only accept it.

'Generally speaking, this was among the unspoken rules which were already not considered strict. After all, I am a new member and it is only logical for him to test me out...'

Fang Yuan came to the headquarters of the Realm Alliance and started to browse the information on the rock tablet.

As a 2nd Leaf Cultivator, he had certain rights and could access parts of the information bank. Pieces of information from the information bank were either mostly not found on the rock tablet in the Dream Realm, or they were classified. After all, it was not a bad thing to read up more.

Of course, the missions on the rock tablet in the Dream Realm were more generic and it was the place where the 5 powerful organisations would interact.

"I am clear about the cultivation of a dream soldier master and am looking forward to the next dream-traversing opportunity... As for that mysterious force in my body, I need to clear it out as soon as possible before I reach the 4th sword, otherwise, things would get tricky!"

There was a look of depression on Fang Yuan's face.

When he achieved a breakthrough previously in the Three World Mountain, he had the help of the mysterious but evil force.

Although it was not affecting him now, it would be troublesome if he were to lose control over the mysterious force in the future!

"The 4th Tier of Illusionary Divine is a big leap. Among us dream soldier masters, it would mean that we can form the spirit of the swords. This is especially so for the 8 Gates Sword Array. After forming the spirits of the 4 swords, I would be able to harness at least half the potential of the 8 Gate Sword Array... Therefore, I must quickly get rid of the evil force in me!"

Once the magical soldiers get their spirituality, their power would increase by folds and they could potentially fly on their own to attack enemies. This would be similar to the Fiery Dragon Child of Elder Smelter.

The mysterious force might affect the spirit of the sword, making it an evil spirit. If that becomes the case, Fang Yuan would become the slave to his swords.

"Tian Xiezi... Why are you still causing trouble a few hundred years after your death?"

Fang Yuan gave a cold look as he continued to browse the information on the rock tablet.

It was extremely rare to encounter any technique which would dispel evil forces in one's body. Most of them would cheat him of his money and those who potentially could help were charging more than he could afford.

Finally, something was different.

"9 Smelting Technique (Incomplete): Able to purify and remove foreign true energies from one's body. The setback would be that one's cultivation would drop, and the drop is dependent on how polluted one's body is..."

"Only an incomplete version? Furthermore, it can only purify true energy? What about elemental force and dream elemental force?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin.

As a 2nd Leaf Cultivator, he could only read up to here. However, from the description, he had the feeling that there was more to it.

If he could get his hands on the complete version, he might be able to purify his true energy, true elemental force and even dream elemental force.

"This is a solution indeed. Of course, the root of the problem is still from Evil Divine Sect!"

Fang Yuan gritted his teeth.

Chapter 285: Black Roc

Tian Xiezi was a dream master of the Evil Divine Sect. After his death at the Two World Mountain, his dream world became the Illusionary World and from then on, Three World Mountain was born.

Just by the dangers of the Three World Mountain alone, it could be deduced that he was at least a 7th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master and was able to create spirits. Even after his death, demons with their own spirits were seen lurking in the Illusionary World.

"What a pity... With my rights as a 2nd Leaf Cultivator, I can only read up to here. There's nothing left below!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and started to worry about how he should travel to the Middle Region.

The world over here was extremely vast. There were 99 regions in Da Qian Empire and every region was already extremely huge. Any average human might not even be able to traverse through an entire region in their lifetimes. Therefore, not many would have been to the capital before.

"The map of the entire Da Qian should be classified information and I need to be at least a 5th Leaf Cultivator before I can get the details... The only information I can gather is the map of the 9 regions nearest to me..."

Fang Yuan looked at the rock tablet as his eyes glittered. "To head towards the Middle Region, the path designated for officials, the Official Path, would be the most convenient path. The officials would report for duty and send troops through the Official Path. However, the requirements to use the path are extremely stringent and there are checks everywhere along the path. Even if I can find my way in, it would take a lot of effort to go through the checks undetected and I would waste too much time..."

As he walked out of the headquarters of the Realm Alliance, he arrived at a public space.

"I am at Victorious East Region. How do I make my way to Middle Region?"

Just a simple thought from him triggered pieces of information which were revealed before him.

"There are mountains and rivers in between East Victorious Region and Middle Region. There are 87 danger areas along the journey and it is a must to take a route around them. The most comfortable and quick way is to take a ride on a spiritual bird. Of course, the journey will also take about a month to a few months..."

Fang Yuan searched and indeed, there were dream masters like the previous Huo Qing.

However, this time, the bird was a huge black [roc beast](#) and it was rumoured that the roc had the blood of the legendary Kun Roc. Its body was as huge as a mountain and it flew at incredible speeds. It was the ruler of the skies.

The dream master must be at least a 4th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master to be able to tame such a powerful bird.

"Black Roc, I want to head to Middle Region!"

Fang Yuan used his spiritual will to communicate to the dream master according to the symbol on the tablet.

"Alright, the journey will cost you 200 contribution points. You will have to pay 100 contribution points as a deposit first and tell me your location. I will reserve a seat for you!"

Not long after, there was a reply.

"Reserve a seat?"

Fang Yuan was shocked.

"Do you think you're the only person I'm fetching?"

Black Roc scoffed. "After receiving the deposit, I will tell you when I'm arriving. The earliest would be 3 days from now and the latest would be a month!"

"Alright!"

Fang Yuan was speechless but paid the contribution points. "I am at Sand Region, Dragon's Head Mountain!"

With the Realm Spirit as a witness, he was not afraid that Black Roc would cheat him of his money.

"Very well, wait for my news!"

After receiving the contribution points, Black Roc left, satisfied.

Fang Yuan remained speechless. Although he knew that it was impossible, he had the feeling as though he was being cheated. With a laugh, he left the Dream Realm as well.

"Could I be feeling this way because I don't have enough contribution points? I have not felt such fear and anxiety in a long while..."

Without wasting time, Fang Yuan made his way towards Sand Region.

He did not know how long he would spend in Middle Region. Therefore, he felt that he should at least inform the Qin Siblings of his movement and remind them to be on their guard. After all, they were his backup plan if all else fails.

...

It was nightfall and the stars glittered brilliantly.

In the Qin Family mansion in Dongyi County.

A silhouette slipped into the mansion and the protective array failed to detect anything.

The Qin siblings were already asleep. Disoriented, they arrived at a place.

There were trees, a river, a small bridge and a small pavilion supported with bamboo poles. A young man sat within and there were a few tea bowls placed in front of him.

"Greetings, Sir!"

The Qin Siblings looked at each other and knew that this was Fang Yuan calling for them in their dreams. Together, they greeting him.

"Take a seat! Have some tea!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands.

"Thank you!"

Qin Qing raised her tea bowl and realised that the bowl was made from ceramic. With its average-looking appearance, it gave off an ancient vibe.

The tea gave off a similar vibe; it was sweet and there was a hint of jasmine fragrance.

"How's it?"

Fang Yuan smiled.

"Simple and elegant!"

Qin Qing smiled and replied. However, Qin Yun was observing the surroundings and came to a realisation. "Are you intending to travel, Sir?"

"Hmmm?"

Fang Yuan looked at him, astonished. "That's right!"

After becoming independent as the family head, Qin Yun felt more matured now. Through all that he had gone through and the new experiences, he seemed like a polished gem.

"In my absence, take care of yourselves..."

After reminding them to take care of themselves, Fang Yuan left.

'Why are they not here... Divine Lotus Cult, what are you thinking?'

The purpose of Fang Yuan returning to the Qin Family Mansion was to track the Divine Lotus Cult's movement as well.

After all, he had become enemies with a reserved Divine Lady and would surely attract the attention of many.

Meng Lian's competitors were grateful to Fang Yuan but none of them would solely depend on Fang Yuan for their success to be the Divine Lady.

'The Divine Lotus Cult and Evil Divine Sect are the two most powerful evil dream master sects and by now, they should have known about my background...'

Thoughts ran through in Fang Yuan's mind as he purposely leaked a hint of his own spiritual aura.

...

"Divine Lady!"

In a mansion within Dongyi County.

Although this mansion was no different from other mansions, anyone who entered it would be shocked.

In a row, 18 lanterns were lighted up, illuminating the interior of the mansion.

There was a golden-furred carpet on the ground and a light fragrance of the lotus flower.

Suddenly, one of the lanterns flickered and in an instant, the flame of the lantern exploded!

"Whoosh!"

In the quiet room, the noise was easily picked up. Two servants in white walked up and looked at the woman sitting on the lantern.

"Lantern C2 had detected something. It must be that person!"

This woman was around 20 and had a gentle demeanour. She had pretty eyebrows and gave off the vibe as though she came from a rich family.

Such a lady would be regarded as a beauty in the world and no one would associate her with the cruel Divine Lotus Cult or think that she was an evil reserved Divine Lady.

At this point in time, the Divine Lady smiled. "The cult has placed an order. No dream master of 4th Tier and above are allowed to go after him, for his is now part of the Realm Alliance... However, they did not impose restrictions on the magical equipment that we can use. Of course, looking at my current cultivation level, I'm not skilled enough to use most of them. However, the Changming Magical Lantern is not an offensive magical equipment as has an extraordinary ability to perform surveillance! I can first detect his location before striking him by surprise!"

After Meng Lian's embarrassing defeat, she not only sustained severe injuries but also used up most of her protective magical equipment. The resources of the Divine Lotus Cult in the vicinity were all used up by her and by letting it all go to waste, she no longer seemed likely to become the chosen one, the Divine Lady.

It was good news for the other 7 reserved Divine Ladies that one of them was no longer in the competition.

Furthermore, if any of them were to be able to capture Fang Yuan, it would be a huge accomplishment. Although capturing Fang Yuan would not directly make her the Divine Lady, at least it would give her the edge over the other reserved Divine Ladies.

This was the reason behind the arrival of this reserved Divine Lady.

"Although this person is extremely cautious and even talks to his

subordinates through their dreams, after my observations, I can tell that he is preparing to travel somewhere far!"

This reserved Divine Lady was witty and immediately gave her orders. "Order the spies in Qin Family to gather information from the Qin Siblings... Also, start monitoring the skies of Dongyi County. If there are any findings, immediately report to me!"

After dismissing them, the reserved Divine Lady remained seated and smiled. "Before embarking on his journey, he would surely enter the Dream Realm..."

She closed her eyes, arrived before the rock tablet in the Dream Realm and started enquiring.

...

After 15 days.

Sand Region, Dragon's Head Mountain.

The Dragon's Head Mountain was a geographically interesting location in Sand Region. Although it was secluded, the peak of the mountain had a panoramic view of the region and the extreme peak had the shape of a dragon's head. Being unique, it attracted many tourists.

Fang Yuan stood on the top of the dragon's head and looked up into the sky, speechless.

"Handsome... that person seems stupid!"

Tourists behind him were commenting on him. A young girl in red robes looked at Fang Yuan and started laughing.

"Don't cause trouble!"

Beside her was a man with a long sword. He looked like a martial artist and he lectured the girl before apologising to Fang Yuan. "My junior is too direct, please don't blame her!"

Both of them dressed up like martial artists but they only had the cultivation of around the 5th to 6th Gate. Fang Yuan did not even

bother to look at them.

"You..."

With such an attitude, both of them were shocked. They knew that the world was huge and there were many highly-skilled people all around. Could they have encountered one themselves?

"Eh? Why is the sky darkening?"

Before being able to continue the conversation, a shadow descended and covered the entire sky.

The tourists in the vicinity looked up and saw a huge bird descending.

In mid-air, a bird the size of a small hill slowly approached. As it came closer, they finally realised that it was an enormous black bird with a huge back and a small building on its back. They were all left tongue-tied.

As the bird descended, huge gusts of wind blew about on the mountain. The martial artist and his junior held on tightly to vines as they were almost blown off their feet.

"Is this the black roc?"

Fang Yuan leapt onto it and felt as though he was standing on a flat piece of ground. Seeing a huge inn ahead, he walked towards it.

"Keke... Brother, welcome to the Black Roc Inn. I hope you will enjoy your stay in the next month with the other guests!"

In the inn, a dream master was standing in the place of an innkeeper. Although he was smiling happily, Fang Yuan could feel his 4th Tier Illusionary Divine Cultivation. "I understand!"

"Whoooo!"

As the black roc spread its wings, it flew up into the sky.

Beneath, the martial artist and his junior were stunned.

Fortunately, they did not start a fight with Fang Yuan. Otherwise, they wouldn't have time to regret...

The Roc is an enormous legendary bird of prey in the popular mythology of the Middle East.

Chapter 286: Mengmei

"That's good!"

The Black Roc Beast, with its black feathers and plump body, gave a genial smile that carried a hint of arrogance.

"Currently, my Black Roc Inn has 19 guests and 36 servants. After I receive 3 other dream masters and their servants, we will set off and arrive in the Middle Region...of course, dear guest, you are a dream master and we will arrange for you to stay in the Tianpin Room!"

"Servants?"

Fang Yuan found it mildly strange.

"Of course... not every dream master is alone like you are. In this day and age, the dream masters trained by the influential clans, even the ones of a lower level, set off on their journeys with at least a few spiritual knights."

Black Roc scoffed.

"Some even have large harems that serve them wherever they go. These people merely rely on their wealth to get by, and they actually hope to achieve great things, hmpf..."

Its tone was contemptuous as if it favoured Fang Yuan, a lone cultivator, over the rest of them.

Fang Yuan gave a wry smile as he listened.

It was not that he had nobly decided to go at it alone. His situation had more to do with his foundations being too weak and inability to source for manpower.

Of course, to others, a dream master at the Illusionary Divine stage without followers was a person who had clearly decided to wholeheartedly pursue enlightenment.

Without another word, Fang Yuan went straight to his room and

saw that it was spacious and well-tidied. There was a sleeping quarter, a living area and even a meditation corner.

Of course, there was no kitchen.

After all, it was high up in the air, and there were restrictions. Still, there was a common kitchen with a full-time cook.

If the customers were dissatisfied, they could book the kitchen for their own use. The service was indeed rather comprehensive.

"If Huo Qing could be considered a solo journeyman, then the Black Roc is exaggerating slightly..who knows, he might actually achieve something given time..."

Fang Yuan opened up the windows and stared out into the strong winds and blue skies of the world outside, deep in thought.

...

With the darkening of the skies came dinner time.

Most of the dream masters preferred peace and silence and rarely took their meals in the inn's common dining hall. They had their meals sent to them in their rooms where they could frolic about with their concubines and live like gods.

Fang Yuan did not have such a capacity and therefore, ordered a meal in the hall.

The dishes were served quickly by the waiters, who were also cultivators who had obtained elemental force. They were most likely followers of the Black Roc and they seemed completely content with carrying out their menial tasks.

"Dear guest, the served meals are complimentary, free of charge. Of course...if you want more food, you can inform our chefs, or send your servants to the kitchen to prepare the food. For this, we will charge a fee!"

This servant looked to be in his thirties. However, the Wu Zongs would tend to look much younger than their actual age, and Fang

Yuan placed his estimate closer to sixty years old. The articulate servant had a white towel draped over his shoulder. He was probably a runner.

"No need, this is more than enough!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and dismissed him.

The occupants of the dining hall were few, and Fang Yuan picked a corner where he could dine in peace.

The meal was extremely sumptuous and consisted of three dishes and a soup. It was chicken soup which was rich and fragrant and it whetted the appetite. Just one taste and Fang Yuan immediately knew that the chicken in question was fed with spiritual rice. It was truly special.

The other three dishes were: mushrooms and greens, meat slices and a stir-fried mix. They were all fantastic. The chef responsible for this meal was definitely better than the cook he had recruited in the Da Yuan mainland. Fang Yuan helped himself to more servings of food eagerly.

"The rice used is the Cloudy Pearl Rice, which can be considered a luxury good. However, the quality is still somewhat lacking in comparison to the Yellow Grain Rice.."

After he had his fill, Fang Yuan rubbed his tummy and sighed contentedly.

At this time, a gentle voice floated in.

"The Yellow Grain Rice is a top-grade spiritual good and is extremely beneficial to us dream masters. The plant only grows under harsh conditions and is a rare find in the territories controlled by the 5 powerful organisations. Only the Da Qian aristocrats are capable of supplying Yellow Grain Rice in bulk. But to me, this is the most improbable method to acquire the rice!"

Fang Yuan turned around and noticed a beautiful young lady in robes of lotus-green. She looked like she was of noble birth, and

blushed when she met his gaze.

"Thank you for your explanation! I am Fang Yuan, may I have your name?"

"I am Liu Mengmei, a member of the Liu Clan in the Middle Region..."

Liu Mengmei had a very sweet-tempered outlook and her manner of speech was demure.

"I see!"

As a traveller, Fang Yuan was unwilling to engage a stranger in anything beyond casual conversation and toasted her before turning around to leave.

He had to concur that the wine served by the inn was of good quality; it was clear and smooth on the throat. Fang Yuan was beginning to feel tipsy after only a few cups.

Fang Yuan was not a hardcore drinker and this amount of alcohol was just right. Fang Yuan thus walked back to his room.

Liu Mengmei watched on as Fang Yuan's silhouette faded into the distance. With a smile on her lips, she retired to her room as well.

"Divine Lady!"

Two female servants in green were already waiting in the room and bowed in greeting as Liu Mengmei entered.

"Mm, that person is indeed heading towards the Middle Region. Our preparations seemed to have paid off..."

Liu Mengmei continued on after a pause.

"It is just that he is extremely guarded. It will be difficult to get close to him. Not to mention that this place is under the protection of Black Roc, and taking action here will break his rules! Set up the Nine Lotus Divine Lantern Soul-infusing Array! I will take him on in the dream world!"

"Yes my Lady!"

The two female servants bowed out of the room and began with their preparations.

To the dream masters, there were many ways to kill someone without spilling blood.

Also, as long as the ongoing conflict between the Divine Lotus Cult and the Realm Alliance did not violate the fundamental laws or inconvenience the other guests, the Black Roc would not dare to interfere!

Liu Mengmei smiled and walked over to the centre of the 9 Perpetual lamps with the seal in her hands. She sat down with a solemn look on her face.

"Chi!"

"Poof"

Around her, the Perpetual Lamps lit up instantly, and a clandestine wave shot out.

...

In his room, Fang Yuan sat down relaxedly with his legs crossed.

"Not bad, not bad! This building is constructed of spiritual wood and arranged based on an arraying technique, which enables elemental gathering and concealment...in fact, the whole inn is a giant magical tool. Every room occupant has a small degree of authority, but the core of power belongs to Black Roc!"

Based on Fang Yuan's knowledge of arraying techniques, this was all he could tell.

Still, he was very sure that the Black Roc was not only a dream master in the Illusionary Divine

stage, but was, in fact, an array master.

At Black Roc's level of cultivation, he could lay out sentient

arrays that could operate independently of the array master and exert immense power!

However, if Black Roc really had ill-intentions, there was only one way things could end: He could destroy by the many dream masters residing in the Inn.

With this unspoken threat, together with the guarantee of fairness by the divine beings, Fang Yuan's safety and privacy were more or less assured on this journey.

"But...what about that woman, Liu Mengmei?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin and a slight smile played on his lips.

Although Liu Mengmei had disguised herself well, and there were no hints of similarities between her and Meng Lian, but Fang Yuan had a feeling nevertheless.

And there was no need to mention that when Fang Yuan had deliberately released his spiritual aura at the Qin Manor, this woman had swooped right in. It was too much of a coincidence.

"I doubt this Divine Lady would be as bold as to fight in midair and endanger the safety of dozens of dream masters...the only possibility would be to engage in the traditional way of dream masters!"

Fang Yuan shut his eyes confidently and entered a deep stage of meditation.

.....

It was deep into the night.

Fang Yuan aura was in the dream world. Suddenly, felt a disturbance.

"She has arrived? I cannot wait!"

A cold smile broke out on his face.

"To be able to break through the barriers placed around the inn is

no mean feat. However, barging into my dream world is a mistake. This woman is slightly more powerful than Meng Lian since she is at the illusionary divine stage!"

At the borders of his dream world, a fog started to gather.

It was clear that Liu Mengmei had ill intentions and was indeed barging into his dream world.

Fang Yuan had the protection of the 8 Gates Sword Array. If activated the array, the woman's concentration would be severely affected and she would suffer.

"However...this does not fit in with my original plan!"

Fang Yuan sensed that Liu Mengmei was at the 1st Tier of the Illusionary Divine stage and had the help of a magical tool.

He waved his hand and the 8 Gates Sword Array immediately dimmed, allowing the fog to infiltrate. His true aura was momentarily dazed and he nearly fell into the dream.

'If I remain asleep after a certain period of time, the 8 Gates Sword Array will immediately reappear to eliminate the approaching enemy!'

In that moment of unconsciousness, according to the Three Corpse Seven Murderous Magic Splitting Technique, Fang Yuan's thoughts will be separated from his body and be transferred to the 8 Gates Sword Array.

Now that his body and consciousness were both protected, Fang Yuan had no qualms about taking on the Divine Lady.

"She actually dared to infiltrate my home ground with a prowess of only the first stage. Even with the help of a magical tool, this is extreme foolishness..."

Fang Yuan's spiritual will acted up, and he fell immediately into a dark swirl.

...

It was dawn and golden rays fell upon the earth.

Beneath the green mountains, the roosters crowed, and the little village came alive.

"When Heaven is going to give a great responsibility to someone, it first makes his mind endure suffering. It makes his sinews and bones experience toil, and his body to suffer hunger. It inflicts him with poverty and knocks down everything he tries to build. In this way Heaven stimulates his mind, stabilizes his temper and develops his weak points...[Mencius, Gao Zi Part 2]"

A bright voice reciting the classics floated out of a straw hut.

The door opened. A beautiful and kind looking lady walked out. She looked like she was younger than 20 years, and yet her hair was arranged as though she was married. She went over to the chicken coop and picked up two warm eggs, and broke into a smile.

"Good girl!"

She sprayed some grains on the floor to reward the hen.

After that, she busied herself with chopping firewood, boiling water, cooking rice. Beads of perspiration decorated her forehead even though the weather was cold.

The farmer's life was undoubtedly a tough one, not to mention that they also had to support the scholar at home.

Before the morning light was at its peak brightness, breakfast was ready. A pot of porridge, two servings, one thick and one thin. The woman added an egg into the thick serving, and after some hesitation, added another. She then walked over to the adjoining room.

"My husband, it's time for breakfast!"

Chapter 287: Horse Bandits

"Mmm, it's been hard for you, wife!"

With gratitude, Zhang Han commented as he walked out and rubbed his red eyes.

He was around 20 and wore a scholar's attire. However, it was ordinary clothing and one could tell that he was not an imperial scholar. He had a skinny look at they were leading poor lives.

Looking at the egg in his bowl and the soup that his wife had prepared, he had a heavy heart. "Mei'er, it has been 3 years since we've been married. Every day, you're doing the hard labour and it has been hard for you..."

Quickly, he picked up his chopsticks and started to peel the egg, but was stopped by his smiling wife. "I'm fine. Besides, what's more important is your studies!"

"One is enough for me, have more for yourself!"

Zhang Han insisted and wanted to give her another egg. Although his wife knew that he was persistent, she stood firm and rejected.

Under her supervision, Zhang Han ate his egg. Laughing, Mei'er started to eat her egg as well, delighted.

Could this be happily ever after?

Witnessing this scene, tears welled up in Zhang Han's eyes as he almost cried.

After breakfast, Mei'er cleared the table while Zhang Han appeared dazed.

Hmm, his name was Zhang Han and he was a scholar. His family had about a hectare of farmland, a few hostels, and he had a wife for himself.

When he was young, Zhang Han's family was rather affluent and

could afford for him to study. However, afterwards, his siblings were fighting for their parent's inheritance. He had no grounds to fight and only inherited a little. There was no progress in his studies as well and slowly became the joke of the village. Slowly, poverty set in.

"Mei'er, don't you worry! I will become an Imperial Scholar and let you live the rest of your life in bliss!"

Zhang Han was determined as he clenched his fists.

"That's right! I shall wait for then!"

His wife, who was busy, turned around and smiled, filling his heart with encouragement.

In the ancient times, being an Imperial Scholar was a big thing. They were not obliged to greet officials and were exempted from slavery. Additionally, officials would reward them with plots of land. The top students would be given a fixed amount of staples every month. Although they were still not considered rich, they were well-to-do.

However, Zhang Han was a bit of a nerd and was unsuccessful many times in many examinations.

Zhang Han felt a little different today. As he looked at his wife rushing towards the farm, he walked over. "Let me help you!"

"That's not appropriate. You are a scholar, how can you do the menial stuff?"

Mei'er rejected his help and spoke with fear in her voice.

"Let me accompany you!"

There was nothing Zhang Han could do to convince Mei'er.

The couple walked along the farm. It was cold and there was a lining of frost on the leaves of the nearby trees.

Zhang Han casually plucked a branch and waved it around at random. As the branch cut through the air, there was a buzzing

sound as though he knew swordplay.

"Husband, it is cold. You should return!"

Mei'er carried a hoe on her shoulders and spoke with worry.
"Your body has always been weak..."

Since young, Zhang Han was a weak boy but now, although he did not wear thick clothing, he did not feel too cold. With a smile, he held Mei'er's hands. "Don't worry, I'm strong!"

Although this was a normal act of intimacy, Mei'er started to blush. "No... Don't do this here! If someone else sees us, we'll be in trouble!"

In the olden times, there were many rules and teachings. Even legitimate couples performing acts of intimacy in public would provoke rumours to be spread, which might cause their death!

Zhang Han was a scholar and knew this. However, he did not let go. "Look around. There's nobody!"

Both of them talked and laughed as they arrived at their own farm.

Mei'er started to tend to the farm and Zhang Han had attempted many times to help her out but was rejected. Finally, he sat on a wooden stump next to the farm and started to read his books.

As the sun rose, Mei'er started to sweat and her sweat slowly dripped onto the soil.

"Who would understand how much effort it takes to harvest rice..."

Zhang Han shook his head and placed his book down. He quickly poured a cup of tea. "Mei'er, take a rest. I can help out!"

"It's alright! I'm almost done!"

Although she claimed that she was almost done, she still stopped whatever she was doing and took the cup of tea over.

Before she could say anything else, the galloping of a horse broke the silence.

"Gallop! Gallop!"

At the horizon, a few black dots appeared. The black dots slowly grew in size and the farmers around were stunned as they looked at the horses.

Suddenly, there was a cry. "The horse bandits are here, run!"

After running a few steps forward, the farmer who cried out was soon caught up by the horse. With a flash, his head rolled onto the floor and his blood spurted everywhere. His body continued to run a few steps forward before tumbling to the ground.

"Father!"

A well-built man cried as he waved his hoe. "D*mn you! I'll fight with you!"

"Whoosh!"

Alas, he was only a farmer. His strength, technique and equipment were far off from that of the horse bandits. Amidst laughter, a horse galloped through and the long sword sliced effortlessly through the hoe and slicing the well-built man in half. His intestines and blood flowed out and it was a horrendous sight.

"Run!"

The other farmers finally realised what was going on as they ran for their lives towards the village.

"Haha..."

As the horse bandits laughed, they chased the farmers around and casually killed a few more of them.

Although there were a few hundred people in the village compared to the few horse bandits, the horse bandits were much more highly-skilled than the rest of them and the chaos which ensued made the villagers unable to regroup and defend.

"Go!"

Zhang Han grabbed his wife's hands and ran. Her hands felt cold, but there was no time to think about it.

One of them was a scholar while the other was a woman. Both of them could not run fast and started to trail behind, attracting the attention of the horse bandits.

"Eh? That lady is sweet!"

One of the horse bandits noticed Mei'er and his eyes glittered as he galloped ahead. "Haha... scholar, give me this lady!"

"Husband! Quickly leave! Don't care about me!"

Mei'er was determined as she pushed Zhang Han away.

"No!"

Zhang Han clenched his teeth. "I am willing to die together!"

"What a couple. It's a pity I won't let your wish come true!"

The horse bandit laughed and chased up to them. With a grip, he pulled Mei'er onto the horse and struck his sword on Zhang Han's head.

"Husband..."

Amidst Mei'er's wailing, Zhang Han's expression changed. Although he appeared stunned, he was already taking action.

In that instant, Zhang Han tilted his body and avoided the sword. His right hand quickly struck out and gripped the horse bandit's wrist. With a pull, the horse bandit wailed as the sword flew out of his hand.

"Clang!"

Zhang Han held the sword and sliced it in the air.

A line of blood appeared on the horse bandit's forehead as he tumbled down the horse's back.

The snatching of the sword and killing of the horse bandit happened within seconds. While the horse bandits behind were still cheering, the horse bandit in front tumbled down, which left them in shock.

"Go!"

Zhang Han leapt onto the horse and along with his wife, they galloped away.

The horse was as swift as wind as it rushed towards the remaining horse bandits.

"Die!"

As he swung his sword out, with the strength of the moving horse, he sliced another horse bandit in half.

"Ah!"

The remaining horse bandits galloped ahead and exclaimed.
"How dare you kill our people!"

"Hmph!"

Zhang Han did not reply them. Instead, he controlled the horse and swung his sword out a few more times. In a few seconds, another 2 horse bandits were sliced off their horses.

"Spare me! Spare me!"

Seeing this, the last horse bandit was petrified as he turned around and escaped.

"Whoosh!"

After galloping for a few seconds, a glow flashed past and struck into the horse bandit's back. It was a sword.

As the horse neighed, it flung the corpse off its back and continued galloping.

"Phew... I would always know who would awaken first!"

After killing the horse bandits, Zhang Han stopped the horse,

kept the sword and gazed at the beauty in his arms. He had mixed emotions.

"Husband... you..."

Mei'er was shocked at what had happened and has yet to compose herself.

"You've sealed your memories? What an effort!"

Zhang Han, nope! Fang Yuan sighed as he pointed his finger at her forehead.

"You..."

Mei'er's mouth was bleeding and she appeared confused. She did not believe that her husband was capable of all that he had just done. Her eyelids became heavy as she started to close them.

At that moment, she opened her eyes and had a mysterious look. "Impossible! I've already harnessed the abilities of the magical equipment and arrays. How can you become self-aware so quickly?"

If Fang Yuan did not become self-aware, the scholar would die under the sword of the horse bandit and Mei'er would act accordingly. This would surely leave a deep impression on her heart.

If she were to repeat this for a few more lifetimes in the dream, she could completely destroy Fang Yuan!

"You don't have to know this... Are you prepared to face the backlash of intruding into my dream world?"

With a sinister smile, the sword essences of the fire and water sword appeared in Fang Yuan's eyes. Slowly, it penetrated Mei'er's eyes. "Reverse this! Dream in a dream! Go!"

Fear was written all over Liu Mengmei's face. Within seconds, she fainted and lost her breath.

"I've caught you!"

With a smile, Fang Yuan carried the corpse in his hands.

He knew that she had the help of magical equipment and her dream world to recreate the past 3 years and force a snippet of memory into Fang Yuan's dream world. Strictly speaking, the dream only started from this morning. Liu Mengmei wouldn't give him so much time, or he might have the chance to become self-aware.

To complete the act to perfection, she used her own mind and sealed her own memories. It was a lot of effort for her to do this to reveal her truest emotions.

"Life is complicated like a dream! Mei'er... thank you!"

Fang Yuan dismounted from the horse, dug a grave and buried Mei'er.

Afterwards, he quickly restored his true appearance and the dream world started to crack.

As a dream master, he needed to have the strong willpower to leave the illusionary. This dream could be the best memory he would ever have, and yet it would not affect how he would live his life in the future.

Entering a dream and leaving it would be akin to being reborn!

Chapter 288: Love Tribulations

Firecrackers erupted as the joyous wedding proceeded.

"First bow to the Heaven and Earth! Second bow to the parents! Spouses bow to each other...."

Under the master of ceremonies' address, the newlyweds bowed to each other and were sent for consummation.

Donned in a wedding garb emblazoned with red silk across his chest, the groom lifted the bride's veil with a jade ornament. Adorned in a grand phoenix tiara and wedding shawl, the belle's indescribable beauty radiated under the red candle lights with a tinge of shyness.

"My lady!"

"My husband!"

As the wedding candles extinguished, nothing could be heard.

...

Out of the blue, the scene changed.

A wedding entourage was happily celebrating, as the bride inside the marriage sedan wept.

Suddenly, as they travelled across a hill, the bride jumped out of the marriage sedan as though she was crazy and dashed towards the tombstone beside the road.

She took off her ceremonious wedding dress to reveal a solemn mourning dress.

"Lady, please don't!"

The matchmaker and the sedan porter were utterly shocked as they looked at the bride wield a dagger in front of the grave, with her face covered in tears.

"If we can't be together when alive, then I rather be buried

together in death!"

The bride appeared resolute as she caressed the tombstone. All of a sudden, she rammed her head into it and a stream of blood flowed down the tombstone.

The tombstone cracked open and two butterflies seemingly fluttered out.

....

Abruptly, the scene changed yet again, now to a dangerous mountain peak.

A young couple was being hunted down by a large group of martial arts experts. Both of them wielded swords, and the woman had an infant swaddled in her arms.

"Father!"

As the young woman turned back to look at a senior, a sorrowful expression appeared on her face, "Brother Tian and I are sincerely in love, in this two hundred over years the two families have been feuding with each other as mortal enemies, how many people have died by now? Isn't that enough?"

"Outrageous! Even if you marry a dog or a pig it's still better than marrying this guy!"

The senior was seething with rage as he spoke, "I rather not have such a daughter. Perhaps, I should have drowned you back then!"

"Master..."

The young man looked at his side's people with a forced smile.

The two sides had been in a bloody brawl for hundreds of years. This time, because of the two lovers themselves, they finally joined forces for once.

"Sigh..., you should just take your own life!"

The master directly declared. It was rare for either of the two

sides to be in agreement with their enemies.

"Sister Mei, have you ever regretted before?"

The young man laughed and looked at his wife.

"I have no complaints and no regrets! As long as I am with you, Brother Tian, I will never regret!"

Not long after, a bloody battle erupted...

...

Da Qian Empire.

It was a cold night. The black roc beast let out a loud, abrupt caw and sped up, with its back still steady.

Inside a covert room in Black Roc Inn, Black Roc suddenly opened his eyes, "Array? Dream Entering?"

Although he was supposed to respect the dream masters' privacy, he was allowed to monitor them if they were attacking each other in their dreams.

After looking at the room number, it was all clear, with a slight headache, "As long as the issues between the Realm Alliance and the Divine Lotus Cult don't cause too much action and disturb others, I better care less to avoid being implicated!"

"Eh?"

Moments later, he wondered, "Can't believe the Reserve Divine Lady has such a high tiered treasure, this means the Dream Master is in danger. Hopefully, the issues don't become big problems..."

Luckily, the two rooms were still relatively peaceful and he could finally be slightly at ease.

However, a short while later, his expression changed yet again.

He was shocked to see Liu Mengmei coming out from his room, arriving in front of Fang Yuan's room.

Such Sky numbered rooms had a Spiritual Will Imprint on it that

could grant limited control powers. As the door squeaked open, it was evident that the person in the room had granted her permission to enter.

Liu Mengmei hesitated a short while before entering the room.

The events thereafter were what he could not see.

Although he was really curious to know who won during this confrontation, he knew if he were to rashly intrude, he would definitely be discovered and this would foster animosity.

"Perhaps, they are evenly matched and might even make peace?"

Perplexed, Black Roc stroked his chin.

...

"You came!"

Inside the room, Fang Yuan sat cross-legged, smiling without saying anything.

"Of course I came, you perverted guy! You got me into deep trouble!"

Liu Mengmei blurted, as her eyes gleamed with both anger and joy, yet with a tinge of tenderness and surprisingly without resentment. Other people would have been pretty shocked to see such a look.

"An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth!"

Fang Yuan shook his head.

"Nevermind..."

Liu Mengmei sighed, "Anyway, you have already become my psychological barrier. No matter what you do, I will still forgive you!"

Just from her state, Fang Yuan could tell she was fully subdued by him. After a mere moment of happiness, a chilling thought emerged in Fang Yuan.

'Deliberately intruding another Dream Master's Dream World is a highly dangerous move. Of course..., this woman put in lots of money to make use of rare treasures' powers to attempt to fully subdue me. Her Real Spirit entered my homeground, the first stage Dream World, and I almost lost. If she succeeded, I am afraid I would have become a marionette under her allure by now.'

'Of course, now that the situation is reversed, not only did she not succeed, on the contrary, I entered her Real Spirit's dream and planted the Eternal Love Tribulations Imprint on her heart. Even though it could only affect the inclination of her fondness, it was sufficient!'

Naturally, it was impossible to fully control a Dream Master, even by any means, it would be discovered by an advanced stage Dream Master immediately.

Hence, Fang Yuan chose another method, which was through utilising dreams within dreams, pestering for an eternity and planting hints, which made Liu Mengmei unknowingly fall in love with him.

It was a choice she made herself, out of natural instincts, without being manipulated by any external powers. Expectedly, it would leave no trace behind while appearing seemingly fitting and reasonable.

Clearly, such situations were very rare, it required the Dream Master to deliberately intrude the opponent's dream with its own Real Spirit, and then be fought back by the opponent, with the Real Spirit falling into Dream World, and finally, the opponent can then possibly make its move.

A Dream Master who deliberately invaded another person's dream world must either be profoundly skilled or fully prepared, so how could she make such a rookie mistake?

And it was the fact that Liu Mengmei picked the wrong opponent that led her to such a state.

"What are you thinking about, my dear husband..."

Noticing that Fang Yuan was in deep thoughts, Liu Mengmei said, "I brought with me my whole heart for you to fully trust this time around, with just a command of yours, I will definitely not leak the whereabouts of my dear husband. Although the Divine Lotus Cult is giving us trouble, it's nothing but a death feud between you and Meng Lian, I will scheme for you and there will be no more future complications!"

"This sounds good!"

Fang Yuan then said, "But can you not call me 'dear husband'!"

"My love for you is already deeply rooted and resolute...."

Liu Mengmei was on the verge of tears, she let out a distraught sigh and said, "Besides, in the Dream World, my dear husband has already taken advantage of me. Are you not going to admit it?"

Even though Fang Yuan was shameless, his face turned red upon hearing that.

Initially, she deliberately designed the Dream World and did not let him take any advantage of her.

However, eternities later, it was him who was toying with her Real Spirit. Naturally, he had no scruples. After having formed such a loving relationship, there were no secrets left in front of her.

"Okay, up to you!"

Through that experience, Fang Yuan knew he broke her heart and has already become a psychological barrier in her heart.

For her to progress, she could only either have the wisdom to break the bond between the two of them or to fully submit to him and there was no other choice!

A wrong thought could cause devastating consequences beyond redemption, and such was the horror of battles between Dream

Masters.

"Also..., we have to maintain our hostile relationship on the surface, there must be a reason for you to come and find me tonight. Hmm, let's just say we were evenly matched as we fought in the dreams, so you came to provoke me. Let's create a small commotion later to prevent Black Roc from suspecting..."

Now that Fang Yuan had gained so much from her, it was certainly not too much to utilise her even more. Fang Yuan then asked again, "Have you brought any rare treasures with you?"

"As a Divine Lady, I am under the protection of the Divine Lotus Print, the Green Yang Divine Lantern..."

As Liu Mengmei listed her rare treasures, cold sweat dripped from Fang Yuan's forehead.

Not only has she cultivated to the Illusionary Divine stage, she possessed numerous protective treasures. The odds were definitely even if they fought face to face.

"Very good, you and I continue to do what we should do, after you reach the Middle Region, you notify your cult that you have aborted the mission as I was too troublesome to handle. There is no need to go too overboard in order to protect your own safety!"

Fang Yuan immediately started to plan, as with her as his pawn, it was definitely beneficial.

"Thank you, my dear husband, for caring about me!"

Fang Yuan knew Liu Mengmei was definitely very happy from the way her eyebrows moved as she smiled beautifully.

After all, he experienced so much in the Dream World, he should be extremely familiar with her.

"Also, when you are back, help me take note of two things. First, it's news about the Evil Divine Sect, things regarding Tian Xiezi..., and also, pay attention and look for the refinery of different spells,

especially rare dream elemental force spells.

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and said slowly.

Liu Mengmei solemnly said, "Regarding the intelligence about the Evil Divine Sect, I can sort them out for you tomorrow. Whereas, regarding the refinery of rare elemental spells? With my current status, I only have information regarding one kind, which is the complete version of the 9 Smelting Technique that can refine rare elemental forces... However, they are ineffective to dream elemental force, but I also heard my Elder mentioned that the 9 Smelting Technique has another version which was known to exterminate all living matter and I believe the rare dream elemental force would not be able to survive it too!"

"Just exchange the complete version of the 9 Smelting Technique for me!"

Fang Yuan said directly, as he pulled out the small sword Elder Smelter gave him, "Do you recognise this item?"

"I don't recognise it!"

Liu Mengmei shook her head immediately.

Fang Yuan had a small glimmer of hope, but could only let out a sigh as he kept the small sword.

The item had a strange build and Fang Yuan did not dare to court death by keeping such an item with unknown origins in the real Dream World.

Moreover, he suspected the item could not even be kept in the Dream World, else the Elder Smelter would not have spent so much effort to look for people to send him the mail.

'I guess I can only start solving this mystery when I reach the Middle Region, at Tianmu Mountain?'

At that moment, he had already made up his mind that he wanted Liu Mengmei to exhaust all channels to source for

information regarding the mountain.

Although the dreams kept cycling, he was detached from it, whereas Liu Mengmei was still deeply trapped in it. The stark differences between their situations naturally resulted in different mentalities.

Truth be told, if Liu Mengmei succeeded initially, the Fang Yuan now would be way more miserable than the Liu Mengmei now.

Chapter 289: Old Mother of Tianshan

Black Roc was experienced in his trade and knew the dangers in the sky. Therefore, their journey was a rather smooth one as he avoided all the spiritual air soldiers.

The black roc beast was the ruler of the skies. By releasing its spiritual aura, the other ferocious animals would make way and would not find trouble for them.

After finish acting with Liu Mengmei, both of them continued to live in their own rooms. After a few days, they made a few friends who were staying in the inn.

Unknowingly, a month had passed and the number of dream masters gradually lessened as they alighted at their destinations.

Finally, the people left behind were just Fang Yuan, Liu Mengmei and a few others.

"Alright, this is the border of Middle Region. If we cross the border, there would be more soldiers patrolling in the skies. By then, even I would not be able to avoid all of them..."

After all, Middle Region was where the royal family of Da Qian stayed. The security was extremely tight here and it was different compared to the other regions.

Needless to say, the capital was there and it was filled with powerful people. Black Roc wouldn't be so foolish as to go there and just by coming to the border of the region was a risk in itself.

"Thank you!"

Fang Yuan and the rest were understanding as they thanked Black Roc and dismounted the black roc beast.

Liu Mengmei left with her servants and took one last glance at Fang Yuan. There was an unwilling look in her eyes and no one could guess that she had completely surrendered herself to Fang

Yuan.

"Haha... Brother Fang, be careful! The demonic ladies of Divine Lotus Cult are a troublesome bunch!"

A dream master noticed them exchanging glances and commented.

He was short and plump like a round ball. Wearing a gold robe, he gave off the vibes of a rich person. There were 8 subordinates following him and among them were Wu Zongs and spiritual knights. He called himself 'Qian Kuan'! He was the person behind a small organisation in Middle Region and had a 3rd Tier Illusionary Divine cultivation.

"I only wish for them not to think about me. That would be all!"

Fang Yuan displayed a troubled look.

"You're handsome and talented, but you seem a little empty... Have you gave it a thought? My promise still stands. Take your pick among my girls, and I shall give them to you!"

Qian Kuan laughed while the few servants behind him remained emotionless. A few of them lowered their heads in embarrassment, while others were winking at him, trying to attract his attention.

"This... I don't think this is suitable for me. Thank you for your offer, though!"

Although it was extremely normal for dream masters to exchange subordinates, Fang Yuan would not accept the offer from a stranger! After rejecting Qian Kuan, he promptly left.

Black Roc laughed as he witnessed this scene. After the last visitor had left, he sighed. "He is indeed carefree... It has been awhile since I saw someone like this. I wonder how far can he go... How is this any of my business?"

He walked up the black roc. With a chirp, it shot into the air and disappeared.

...

"Middle Region is indeed the middle of the world. Even the elemental energy here is plentiful..."

As he took a walk in the forest, he sighed.

He could feel that the natural elemental energy was rather concentrated here. It was at least 5 times as dense as that in Sand Region. Therefore, normal humans living here would be able to increase their life expectancy and cultivators would be able to easily achieve breakthroughs. However, the most important was the fact that the capital was here and business was booming. With the increasing population, the Middle Region would be as powerful as 5 other regions combined!

"Of course, the control of the Imperial Court is stricter here in Middle Region. It would be impossible for me to bluff my way through with a fake identity..."

Previously, he was miles away from where everything was, but now everything was in front of him! There were plenty of soldiers and highly-skilled people here!

Even the 4th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master Black Roc would fear the region. Fang Yuan would surely understand that he had nothing to show off here.

"Tianmu Mountain!"

Opening the map, he could see a path. "Mmm... This mountain is at the Northwest of Middle Region. It is only a few hundred miles from the Jade Capital. Or should I say... This is the limit of the 5 powerful organisations of the dream masters!"

He now knew that Tianmu Mountain was an obstacle planted by the dream masters in the Middle Region.

By the looks of it, the dream master in control of the mountain must be powerful.

He had to be at least a 7th Tier Illusionary Divine dream master to stand firm under the scrutiny of the Imperial Court.

"Could his cultivation be even higher... like the Prominent Divine Stage?"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

...

After 7 days, Fang Yuan finally arrived at the foot of Tianmu Mountain. The tall mountain towered before him.

What surprised him was that the mountain did not appear dangerous. In fact, there was a huge city at the foot of the mountain with trade happening everywhere. Business was booming

"The owner of Tianmu Mountain.... How can I find you?"

There were patrolling guards at the city gates. If Fang Yuan wanted to do something to bluff his way through, he would be able to do so. However, there was no need.

He made his way around the city and went straight to Tianmu Mountain.

He guessed that based on the owner's abilities, he should be able to detect Fang Yuan's arrival.

The vegetation was dense and crickets chirped.

Tianmu Mountain was covered with lush greenery and was full of elemental energy. It was an excellent place for cultivators to train for it had gathered energy from everywhere.

Of course, what piqued Fang Yuan's interest was the fact that there were traces of dream masters. He could detect it the moment he entered the mountain.

"Come out!"

After walking a few feet, Fang Yuan sighed and looked in a

certain direction. "I have no grudges against you. Why are you stalking me?"

"Whoosh!"

As soon as he finished his sentence, the surroundings started to change. A wave appeared in mid-air and spread, revealing a hidden array meant to kill.

The spiritual light on the array was glowing and the energy around the array was surging. Even Fang Yuan would be troubled by the array if he were to step in.

But now, since the array was revealed, it was no longer a threat.

"Although we have no grudges, the fact that you are visiting Old Mother of Tianmu means that you must have a token! Since you are in the fight as well, this is only normal!"

From the shadows, a dream master emerged. He had white eyebrows but black hair and seemed about 50 years old. With the cultivation of Illusionary Divine, he was considered rather good among the dream masters.

"Oh? I'd like to hear more about it!"

Fang Yuan sighed. He knew that he was tricked by Elder Smelter and had unknowingly gotten himself involved in trouble.

"Don't you know about it? Don't you have a token with you?"

The dream master was confused as well.

"Whoosh!"

At that moment, a red streak of sword essence exploded in mid-air and flashed.

"You..."

He shrieked as the space around him started to bend. As the sword essence struck onto the ground, a charred hole appeared.

"A dream array master? With some illusionary spells?"

Fang Yuan laughed heartily and walked up. He blocked the path of the dream master as the dream master tried to escape into the array. With the wave of his hand, a chilly blue streak of sword essence appeared. "Go!"

Combining the powers of fire and water, the array master started to retreat and quickly shouted a formula. "Strike!"

As he chanted his formula, he started to distort and become translucent. It was as though he was about to disappear in the next moment.

"Keke... What a small trick. Destroy!!!"

4 spiritual meridians appeared on Fang Yuan's back as his muscles started to grow. With that, he exclaimed.

With the Seventh Elemental Force and the thick blood of Wu Zongs, the air around him shook, revealing the shocked face of the dream master.

"You... do you want to live or die?"

Since there might be a possibility of other highly-skilled people observing their fight, Fang Yuan did not want to continue using his powers as a dream master. Instead, he used his martial arts and with a flying kick, he struck the dream master and placed the fire sword on his neck.

"Master!"

Everything happened within seconds. Only when Fang Yuan held the dream master to his neck did a few people appear from the thick vegetation with shocked looks.

"Tell me... what is the use of the token?"

Fang Yuan held the fire sword and forced an answer.

"How can you not know?"

The dream master was in a daze. "Why are we still fighting, then?"

"You speak too much nonsense!"

Fang Yuan frowned. The fire sword flickered and the few surrounding Wu Zongs quickly retreated as though they had been hit.

"A token is a token! It is the item you need to enter the Changli Mountain Hollow!"

With his life on the line, the dream master spilt everything out.

"Changli Mountain Hollow? What has it got to do with this token? Also, where is Old Mother of Tianmu, the owner of the mountain?"

Fang Yuan probed further.

"It has nothing to do with the token. The Changli Mountain Hollow is a joint discovery by the 5 powerful organisations of the dream masters. The token was also created by the 5 powerful organisations and it is rumoured that with the token, one will be able to get help from Old Mother of Tianmu to enter the Changli Mountain Hollow. Changli is a person rumoured to have attained the Prominent Divine Stage. Even though he had passed away, whatever that he left behind was enough for us descendants to enjoy for a long time to come..."

With a sword by his neck, the dream master blurted out everything he knew quickly.

"I see. You don't have a token, so you wanted to snatch mine. What a person..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and asked a final question. "Where is Old Mother of Tianmu?"

"This... I have no idea!"

"Since you have no idea, what's the use of being alive?"

A murderous look flashed across Fang Yuan's face. He would not let anyone with ill intentions towards him get away.

The fire sword shook and was about to land.

"Bang!"

As the ground shook, a green vine appeared and shielded the dream master from the sword.

"Ding!"

Although fire was the weakness of wood, the Leaving Fire Sword could not damage the green vine. Instead, there was a distinct sound like jade colliding with ice.

A voice was heard in Fang Yuan's ear. "I don't wish to see blood!"

"It's Old Mother of Tianmu! Greetings!"

Seeing the appearance of Old Mother, Fang Yuan stopped and took a bow.

"I know the intentions for your visit. I am willing to see you!"

Fang Yuan kept his sword and followed the vine. Son, he arrived before a cliff, which was covered in green rocks.

As soon as he arrived, the cliff started to split, revealing a black tunnel.

Chapter 290: Mountain Hollow

The tunnel was dark. As soon as he entered the tunnel, his mind entered a state of confusion.

He could feel as though he was falling. Tensed, Fang Yuan prepared his sword essence.

However, as soon as he woke up, he realised that he was standing in a hall. In front of him was a platform 10 feet wide and 30 feet tall. There was a glow coming from the top of the platform like a sun, and there was a silhouette of a person on the platform.

"Greetings, Old Mother of Tianmu!"

Fang Yuan took a deep bow and felt stunned as he detected the person's vast and powerful spiritual aura.

"Hehe... are you not afraid that you've got the wrong person?"

A clear voice travelled from the platform as though it was from a 15-year-old girl.

'I don't really have a choice here!'

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes inside but gave a respectful look. "Only the Old Mother of Tianmu would have such a majestic entrance!"

"You're right! You're from the Realm Alliance. What are you here for?"

The Old Mother on the platform laughed, and Fang Yuan felt as though he was being seen through.

"Ring!"

At this point in time, there was a chime from his robes. The small sword flew out and shimmered a brilliant red.

"This is a token from Elder Smelter of my alliance. Please accept it!"

Fang Yuan continued respectfully.

"Hehe... This token is not mine, but yours!"

As the glow of the sun spread, the face of a beautiful lady appeared, but all that Fang Yuan could see was a pair of glittering eyes.

Calm and emotionless... yet high up like a god.

She seemed like the gods in the heavens from the other realms which he had visited.

"Mine..."

As he mumbled to himself, he realised that he had fallen into the plan of Elder Smelter.

"That's right! It is extremely rare for anyone from the 5 powerful organisations to get the chance to visit the Changli Mountain Hollow! Who would've guessed that Elder Smelter would give it to you!"

The Old Mother of Tianmu mocked him. "Could you be... his illegitimate son?"

"... If I don't want this token, what will happen to me?"

Fang Yuan was speechless and directly asked about the token.

"There are no ifs. As long as you are a member of the 5 powerful organisations and you have the token, you can enter the Changli Mountain Hollow as you wish. If it is yours, it will be yours. Others cannot take this away from you, and you cannot reject this!"

The Old Mother of Tianmu sounded strict, as though this was a heavenly law.

'This is not good!'

Fang Yuan's hair stood on its ends.

"Be on your way!"

At that moment, from the Old Mother's finger, a streak of light landed on the small red sword.

After receiving the glow, the sword exploded and struck forward, shattering the mid-air. A door was revealed.

Fang Yuan quickly felt a huge force pushing him towards the door. Before he could react, he was sucked into the door.

In the next moment, the platform regained its peace once more, except for the golden glow of holy light which spread across the entire floor.

"You're clever to be on your guard. However, it will depend on your luck to see if this is a good or bad thing for you!"

Old Mother of Tianmu mumbled to herself. Soon, she returned to the glowing sun and disappeared.

...

"What the hell!"

In mid-air, a door appeared and a person fell from it.

Fang Yuan had composed himself and landed squarely on the branch of a tree. Looking at the dense vegetation, he knew that this was no longer Tianmu Mountain, but within a hollow.

While he was travelling to this hollow, a line of information appeared, allowing him to understand where he was.

"This is... the inside of the Changli Mountain Hollow?"

The hollow was, in fact, a miniature version of a small world.

Of course, such a miniature version was yet to be matured. Therefore, it still had to rely on the Da Qian Empire.

Changli was a Prominent Divine dream master and after his passing, his inheritance was a hollow situated near Tianmu Mountain.

Therefore, with the Old Mother of Tianmu in control and together with the power of the 5 powerful organisations, they had finally located the hollow.

Unfortunately, the hollow would reject access to highly-skilled dream masters. Therefore, in every organisation, they had to send a dream master of 4th Tier and below to explore the hollow. Everything would be kept a secret and only when the representatives arrive here, they would be briefed on the details of the hollow.

Of course, Fang Yuan felt like laughing after knowing of this.

"Why didn't he send someone who was loyal and had potential? Why did he send me? I have only just joined the alliance! This place must be full of dangers lurking everywhere!"

The state which he was in was akin to his many dream-traversing experiences. However, the only difference was that the hollow was within Da Qian and that he was using his real physical body!

If he were to die, he would really die and there would be no chance for him to come back.

"Elder Smelter, Old Mother of Tianmu... Although they might seem like respectable people in peacetime, they would be ever so willing to sacrifice those under them in times like this....."

He shook his head and started to gather information about him.

"Now... the hollow has yet to be activated. This should be the boundary of the hollow..."

Fang Yuan looked far and could see a layer of fog all around, surrounding him and the forest within.

"Based on the information, I will need to wait for another 2 months for the hollow to be activated. By then, the few of us selected explorers would have to explore the hollow and retrieve treasures from within. Of course, it would be best if we can obtain the Prominent Divine dream master's inheritance. If we can take complete control over the hollow, the organisation we come from would be heavily rewarded!"

Unfortunately, Fang Yuan was unwilling!

"After my arduous exploration, the rewards will still not go to me!"

"Fortunately, I have 2 months to spare... Furthermore, it seems like Old Mother of Tianmu has intentionally split the explorers up to prevent us from killing each other and wasting our energy..."

The size of a hollow would be as huge as a region or even a few regions combined.

With such a huge area and being separated by an array, other dream masters would not dare to do anything to it and hiding a few people within the hollow would most likely go undetected.

Of course, when the restrictions would be lifted and when all of them would head to the centre of the hollow, they would be detected by then.

"Does this mean that... now is my precious time to rest?"

Fang Yuan laughed, examined the geography of the area and casually came to a cave.

The hollow of this Prominent Divine dream master was indeed impressive. Every flower, every grass, every rock and every tree was exactly the same as the outside world.

Also, there was an exact same sun which glared from the skies.

Fang Yuan could not comprehend such complexity. Instead, he closed his eyes and attempted to enter the Dream Realm.

"I cannot feel it... It seems like I am separated from it by a void space... It seems that although the hollow depends on Da Qian for its existence, it is still an independent world after all..."

Fang Yuan sighed.

As soon as he realised that he was unable to enter the Dream Realm, most of his plans became futile. This would mean that he would not be able to call for backup.

"They didn't even give me time to prepare. It feels like they are

plotting something against me... It's a pity that even if I am able to make it out alive, I am unable to immediately get my revenge!"

Fang Yuan's eyes were burning with passion.

"Looking at my 2nd Tier cultivation, it seems like I would be the weakest among all the explorers. Without any magical equipment to protect me, I would be endangered..... Extremely endangered!"

"In the next 2 months, I must quickly increase my cultivation. I must at least achieve the 3rd Tier of Illusionary Divine and gain some experience from the hollow before I become capable enough to explore the heart of the hollow. If I am discovered by other dream masters, I can only fight with all my life!"

"The only solution is the dream-traversing technique!"

Fang Yuan mumbled to himself and a look of determination appeared on his face.

He had yet to reach the maximum potential in the previous Water Realm. Therefore, he had left with the intention to return and reap everything from it in the future.

And now, his physical body was facing a threat. He could not care so much and had to do whatever he could. "Although I will only have 1 to 2 years over there, with careful planning, I will be able to gain enough karma! This is what I can use to protect myself!"

Fang Yuan gritted his teeth. After sealing the cave, he did a thorough check of his surroundings before starting to dream-traverse.

"The previous two times, I had the assistance of the Realm Spirit. Now, I will have to locate the coordinates myself, making it more troublesome. Furthermore, I will have to take care of my own physical body. Fortunately, with the Three Corpse Seven Murderous Magic Splitting Technique, I can leave a hint of consciousness to check on my physical body. If I encounter any danger, I can wake up immediately!"

As for locating the coordinates outside the Dream Realm, Venerable Dream Traverser had also described the process before... Most importantly, it is fortunate that I have gone to the Water Realm before with the use of Realm Evidence. With my incarnation within the Water Realm, it shouldn't be too hard to awaken it!"

He adopted a comfortable posture and laid down before executing his dream traversing technique.

As he closed his eyes, among the universe, it was as though one of the worlds had detected him and started to call out to him.

This was the connection between his real body and his incarnation. They shared the same consciousness and it would be extremely hard to separate them.

"This is the one!"

A Yin Spirit floated out and shook in mid-air. As it condensed elemental force, it started to perform a ritual.

In the middle of the ritual, space started to distort and slowly, a swirl appeared in mid-air. The calling from the incarnation was heard coming from the swirl.

Seeing this, Fang Yuan leapt into the swirl without hesitation.

"Bloop!"

As the swirl shook, it dispersed. As everything darkened, the cave returned to its original state.

...

Tianmu Mountain.

Flames started to appear as a fiery dragon danced around and transformed into a child.

Looking up at the platform, there was a look of fear and respect written on his face. "Old Mother of Tianmu, all my people have entered!"

"The Realm Alliance contributed 5 people and both the Divine Lotus Cult and Evil Divine Sect contributed 6 people each. Baize Mountain contributed 3 people and Source Seeking Sect contributed 1. Including the 10 over lone cultivators that we have attracted, everyone is accounted for..."

On the platform, the glow was glaring. Old Mother of Tianmu appeared and she was calm. "We have arranged it in a way that they will all meet as soon as the heart of the hollow is activated. There will be surely more than 20 deaths and we will fulfil the requirement of blood sacrifice..."

"Sigh..."

The Fiery Dragon Child who was possessed by Elder Smelter sighed. "Who would've guessed that the seal of Changli Mountain Hollow would require the blood sacrifice of dream masters in the Illusionary Divine Stage to be broken for us to enter? All of us have no choice. At most... we shall compensate whoever is fortunate among them to survive!"

Chapter 291: Return

The seal on Changli Mountain Hollow was real, but Old Mother of Tianmu would surely not tell Fang Yuan the truth.

They were just sacrificial sheep!

They were planned to kill each other and from there, satisfy the requirements to break the seal.

Because of this, every organisation put in their best effort to trick newcomers into entering the hollow.

"Sigh... Why is the requirement so weird? To ask for Illusionary Divine dream masters under the age of 60? Although we have such talents, they are painstakingly trained by us. How can we sacrifice them just like that? The only solution is that every organisation contribute a few..."

Elder Smelter sighed.

"Why is that? Are you soft-hearted now?"

Old Mother of Tianmu laughed.

"Nope!"

Elder Smelter's expression remained unchanged. "We are not killing them completely. It's just that we've given them a slim chance of survival and it's up to them to see if they can do it. Furthermore, after the seal is broken, they can also enjoy the spiritual treasures in the hollow. This will be their fate! Whoever can survive will be the true talents! The rest of them would be killed because they are useless and do not deserve to survive!"

"Haha... Well said!"

Before Old Mother of Tianmu could continue, a black silhouette on the wall started laughing. "Dream masters are all respectable! How can we let the useless people destroy our reputation? Only by such a method can we sieve out the real dream masters. The

representative from Source Seeking Sect is a reserved who is already aware of the requirements of breaking the seal! Furthermore, he has voluntarily entered the hollow even after knowing what would happen! If he were to survive, we can officially recognise him as a dream master!"

"Old Xue!"

Elder Smelter was stunned. As his eyes blinked continuously, there was fear written on his face.

After all, the bunch of dream masters from Source Seeking Sect were all crazy!

They were not just crazy, but also powerful and would do anything to attain their goal.

Everyone would feel a little uneasy when facing people from the Source Seeking Sect.

"Don't worry, I'm just here to take a loot... After all, we have a stake in the Changli Mountain Hollow!"

Old Xue laughed, which did not ease their emotions. "Alright, I want to remind everybody that this place is too close to the Jade Capital. The Imperial Court has yet to discover the Changli Mountain Hollow. However, at the moment of blood sacrifice, the energy of the hollow would surge and the Hidden Dragon Guards would be able to locate the hollow and make their way here..."

"If the 5 organisations unite, why should we be afraid of the Hidden Dragon Guards?"

There were flames in Elder Smelter's eyes as he commented.

"We're not afraid of the Hidden Dragon Guards. But if the Imperial Court sends every highly-skilled person they have, we will have trouble!"

Old Mother of Tianmu added.

"The Imperial Court is the biggest thief of all!"

Elder Smelter was enraged by sounded jealous at the same time.

It was no joke that the royal family of Da Qian had the power of the heavens!

Even if normal True Divines and True Elemental spiritual knights would reach their peaks, they would be able to achieve another breakthrough under the blessing of the Dragon Meridian. If they do so, they would be as strong as a Prominent Divine dream master!

Although there were only a few of such people, together with the Hidden Dragon Guards, they were on par even if the 5 powerful organisations were to combine forces.

If they did have such abilities, the royal family of Da Qian would be wiped out long ago.

"Hehe... That's right!"

Old Xue's voice was sharp like a bird. "With the geographical advantage, they are fortunate... We believe that it is the Imperial Court's doing that prevented us from being able to find the source of dream masters... In reality, the inheritance, the hollow, all these are small issues. The 5 organisations should come together to destroy the royal family of Da Qian or even sacrifice their blood. From then, we might be able to trace the source of dream masters..."

"Keke..."

Elder Smelter exchanged glances with Old Mother of Tianmu and was laughing inside. The bunch of dream masters from Source Seeking Sect were indeed crazy!

...

Water Realm, Golden Lake Prefecture, Black Lake District.

The District Leader was no longer Xu Ren. Because of his commendable efforts, he was promoted to the prefecture level

after 3 years. He was now a Prefecture Minister.

In fact, he was slated to become the Prefecture Minister after the retirement of the current Prefecture Minister. Therefore, many people started to support him and establish good relations with him, making him rather influential.

At this point in time, an old daoist with a head full of white hair brought along two children and were strolling on the streets in Black Lake District.

"Mm, the people are doing well and there have been no more sightings of evil gods blackmailing the people. This is good governance!"

The old daoist smiled and stroked his beard in satisfaction.

"I've heard that this is the work of the previous District Leader, the current Prefecture Minister, Xu Ren. He was strict and harsh against thieves and robbers and took the initiative to clear evil gods. He also took extra care of the old people and educated the masses. In 3 short years, the people in the district would no longer steal and there was no need to lock their doors while they were sleeping at night. This is true prosperity..."

The child behind continued but appeared to be only 12-years-old.

On the other hand, the other child looked around and lowered his voice. "The current district leader Zhang Gui is under Xu Ren... Xu Ren served out of pure loyalty last time. Now, he has settled down in the Golden Lake Prefecture. Not only did he shift his entire family here, he has also bought numerous plots of land and rebuilt temples. With all his assets, he is the most influential family in Golden Lake Prefecture!"

"If this is his fate, then it is normal.... Otherwise, how else should he plan for his future?"

The white-bearded old daoist smiled. "The uprising of the people dao is the trend. We daoists should follow the heaven's intention.

Everyone in the Xu Family would be heavily involved in the upcoming tribulation. We must pay close attention!"

"This of course!"

The child behind chuckled. "Our people have been instructed to establish good relations with him. Otherwise, as an official from a foreign land, without us secretly helping him to influence the Imperial Court, do you think he will be able to have such progress? Not to mention how smooth it was for his family to settle down?"

"It's a pity.... The Xu Family is close to many demons..."

The child at the side sighed. "Who knew how the demons started?"

"From the Killer Tribulation, the fates of everyone would be messed up. This is only normal!"

The old daoist's beard drifted with the wind, but his tone was chilly. "These demons want to support the Dragon Court and take our share of fate energy and karma! By killing Clear Wind, they have displayed their persistence! We shall allow that carp demon to live for another day. Hehe, when the time is right, we shall kill the demons in front of Xu Ren to display our might!"

The 3 of them spoke as they walked. Although there were passers-by, they did not leak any information. Soon, they arrived on the outskirts of the city.

"Grandmaster, are we here to kill the giant demon?"

A child asked. Seeing that there was no one around, he toyed around with a hint of sword essence in his hands.

The sword essence was a pure white and as extremely concentrated. However, in his hands, the sword essence became liquid-like and flowed around. The child's cultivation in swordplay was shocking!

Since he looked young, he had to be a reincarnation and was a

powerful person in his past life.

"That's right, it's that giant demon!"

At the outskirts, the old daoist no longer tried to conceal himself. As energy surged around him, his robes flew with the wind. It was a majestic sight to behold; he was like a deity.

Behind him, the two children transformed into swordlight and combined. "Have we located the Giant Venomous Snake?"

"Yes!"

The white-bearded daoist was infuriated. "We had detected something the moment Venerable Clear Wind died. However, the killer was too cruel and did not even leave his spirit behind. Without any leads and after a few years, I have received a prediction from an elder fortune teller. Finally, I know that this is the doing of the two demons from Black Lake District!"

"That carp demon has the protection of the fate energy from Xu Ren, so let's forget about her for the moment. The Giant Venomous Snake is the culprit behind all and lives in seclusion. Therefore, we must kill it to appease our brother. Otherwise, everyone would think that Xuan Zhen Sect is weak!"

"Although this demon has weak karma, it is extremely cunning and would not leave traces behind. We have tracked it a few times but in the past few times, it has escaped successfully... Not this time!"

"Rumble!"

As the 3 of them spoke, they had entered a forest.

The skies changed and fish-scaled clouds appeared. The dark clouds brought with them an atmosphere of danger.

"Is this... Heavenly Tribulation?!"

The daoist was extremely familiar with such a vibe. The clouds were different from the usual dark clouds and therefore, he could

immediately identify it.

"Haha... That's right! This is a Heavenly Tribulation!"

The old daoist laughed heartily. "That Giant Venomous Snake is extremely powerful and has a few tricks up its sleeves. It will be hard to deal with it. However, I have asked the fortune teller to calculate the ripe time to strike. This is the tribulation period of the demon, and therefore, it will not be able to escape us!"

There was a murderous look on his face. "With such a weak fate energy, do you think you can transform into a dragon? Hehe... We are involved in this demon's people tribulation! Striking together with the Heavenly Tribulation, it has no way of escaping!"

With the dark clouds, lightning and thunder, it was the best compass to guide them to the Giant Venomous Snake.

The 3 daoists made their way and soon after, they had arrived at the foot of a mountain.

At the foot of the mountain, there was a source of spring water. The spring water was chilly and gave off cold vibes.

Streaks of lightning began to rip across the skies, forming a net of lightning.

"Haha... This demon's Heavenly Tribulation is indeed powerful! We might not need to strike, and it will be dead!"

Seeing this, the old daoist was overjoyed. However, he became confused. "This doesn't seem right... By helping Xu Ren and clearing the evil gods, it has accumulated good deeds. How can it have such a weak fate energy? How can its Heavenly Tribulation be so intense?"

"This must be because it had gone against the Xuan Zhen Sect! By doing so, it had put itself against the people dao!"

A child laughed. "Regardless, this is good news to us!"

"That's right!"

The old daoist stroked his beard. The 3 of them were daoists and were afraid of approaching the tribulation. Therefore, they looked at everything from afar.

"Kacha!"

"Whoosh!"

Water splashed everywhere and a huge black silhouette appeared.

It had a snake's head ad 4 legs. The scales on its body were black but had a hint of golden glow. As it looked up into the sky, it roared like a ferocious beast.

"What a Giant Venomous Snake!"

The 3 daoists turned shocked. "With such power, no wonder it can attempt to transform into a dragon!"

Chapter 292: Horned Dragon

The Giant Venomous Snake was a powerful type of snake!

With 4 additional legs, it could walk on land and swim in the water. It had limitless abilities.

But alas, its snake properties were still more than its dragon properties. It was still a beast! To become a dragon, it had to undergo a complete transformation! As well as undergo a tribulation!

Now, the scales of the Giant Venomous Snake glittered; it was evident that it had plenty of dragon properties in it. It was unbelievable.

However, this was only Fang Yuan's incarnation. In the past 10 years, it had continuously absorbed the essence of the Dragon Pearl and had grown tremendously. As it roared, its demonic energy exploded from its body and acted as a shield. As the streak of lightning struck its body, there was only a charred mark with no severe injuries.

With how things were, although there were a few more Heavenly Tribulations to come, it could survive all of them with its brute force and transform into a dragon!

"What a demon! Do you really think you can become a dragon? The Xuan Zhen Sect will never allow it to happen!"

The white-bearded old daoist gritted his teeth and whipped out a spiritual talisman which was giving off a purple glow. "I invite all the grandmasters of Xuan Zhen Sect, and together with the help of karma, to destroy this beast!"

"Whoosh!"

The spiritual talisman swirled and formed a purple glow as it shot into the sky.

"Kacha! Kacha!"

A layer of dark clouds formed, filled with streaks of lightning within. They were tribulation clouds and together with the natural heavenly lightning, the intensity of the tribulation increased by folds in that instant.

With a single bolt of lightning, the Giant Venomous Snake wailed as blood spurted out. A big hole was struck on its body and around it were charred marks.

"The Magical Thunder Talisman is the treasure of the sect! There are limited numbers of them and every usage would consume a huge amount of karma and fate energy from the sect..."

Both child daoist were shocked.

"This Giant Venomous Snake is already displaying properties of a dragon. If we really allow it to transform, it will become much more powerful than it was. How can we let that happen? After all, this is a threat to our sect. We have to kill it now!"

The old daoist roared. "Both of you, quickly help!"

"Kill!"

Both children exchanged glances. With a wave of their hands, two streaks of sword essence appeared. One was green while the other was purple. Both of them swung their sword essences at the Giant Venomous Snake.

The two children were actually reincarnations of the elders from Xuan Zhen Sect. They were equipped with the Purple Sword and Green Sword. Although these two swords were still inferior compared to the spiritual treasure of the sect, they were still powerful magical equipment and were comparable to the lightning tribulation!

The swordlight and streaks of lightning combined as they circled the Giant Venomous Snake.

It was an emergency!

...

"D*mn, what is this all about?"

It was a whole new experience for Fang Yuan to locate the world by himself and execute the dream-traversing technique independently.

However, that feeling completely changed as soon as he entered the Water Realm.

A huge force was felt, as though it was about to separate Fang Yuan from his incarnation and isolate him outside of the Water Realm.

The good thing was that the locating of the Water Realm was already in effect. With his incarnation in the realm as well, it was not that easy to separate Fang Yuan from the realm. He was forcefully squeezed into the realm but it felt as though he was locked up in a wooden box and spun around. His spirit felt uncomfortable.

After spinning, he opened his eyes. His dream-traversing technique was successful as he entered his incarnation.

In a short moment, he adapted to his body as information flooded his mind.

"What? It has been 15 years?"

"Is my Giant Venomous Snake undergoing a tribulation now?"

Fang Yuan looked up at the streaks of lightning and felt a little dizzy. "Isn't one month in Da Qian equivalent to one year here? Why is it 10 years now? Is this because of the tribulation here? That it does not want to be disturbed?"

Of course, he could slowly think about all these next time. More importantly, he had to survive this tribulation!

"It was a good thing that I brought along with me the karma I had

earned. However, since this incarnation is slowly breaking down the Dragon Pearl and absorbing the dragon element, there shouldn't be any problem with it!"

He raised his head and was deep in thought as he observed the dark clouds dissipating.

At this moment, a purple glow appeared and the Heavenly Tribulation struck once again.

Furthermore, two streaks of swordlight flashed by. One was green while the other was purple, and both had the intent to kill.

"D*mn!"

Fang Yuan was enraged. "Who dares to attack me!"

There was a hint of gold in his eyes. He wanted to kill.

"Go!"

With that, he activated his actualised dream world. The remnants of people dao karma appeared and formed a golden flower. The golden flower floated to the top of his head before disappearing.

"Buzz!"

The link between the actualised dream world and the realm strengthened once more as two magical swords appeared before the Giant Venomous Snake. "Water-Fire Dual Sword Array, strike!"

"Whoosh!"

Both the Fire Sword and Water Sword flew out, forming a small sword array. With a single sweep, it trapped both the green and purple sword essence within the array.

However, this was all Fang Yuan could do.

In the next moment, the streaks of lightning turned purple and covered the Giant Venomous Snake.

"Rumble!"

Everything shook.

Following, the dark clouds dissipated and sunlight peeked through the clouds. The destructive scene felt like an illusion.

"Eh? Is the Giant Venomous Snake dead?"

The old daoist and the two children exchanged glances. Following, they walked up and saw a 90-feet-long ferocious Giant Venomous Snake corpse.

The corpse was jet-black and was filled with many holes on its body. Every hole was charred and there was a creepy silence in the vicinity.

"It's impressive that it is still able to preserve its corpse after undergoing the Heavenly Tribulation and my Magical Thunder Talisman!"

One of the children scoffed and sounded confused. "Where did the Water and Fire Sword go to? The swords that trapped our sword essences!"

"Hehe... This Giant Venomous Snake is considered a powerful demon. It must have some treasures in it! We cannot let it go to waste!"

The other child laughed and walked up, ready to slit open the demon's stomach.

"Eh? Something's not right, let's get out of here!"

The old daoist was stroking its beard. Seeing the child walking up to the corpse, he did not think too much. However, a piece of jade around his waist suddenly gave off an alarm which sent chills down his spine.

"Whoosh!"

One of the children bent over and was inspecting the Giant Venomous Snake's corpse. It could not run in time and was struck by a White Bone Flying Sword. Without a shriek, he collapsed and

his spirit was destroyed as well. A small purple sword dropped to the ground and a distinct sound was heard. It was still shimmering in its glow, which showed that it had extreme spiritual properties and was unwilling to be destroyed just like that.

"Brother!"

Seeing this, the old daoist and the other child started to tear in their eyes. "Demon, die!"

"Splash!"

Swordlight and magical techniques sliced away at the corpse, breaking it into many pieces.

However, within the corpse, there was a golden glow. The silhouette appeared.

The silhouette was only 3 feet long. It was like a small green-gold snake. The scales on it were green and they emitted a golden glow. On its head, there was a small horn.

As it looked up towards them, there was no snake property. Instead, it had a powerful vibe like a dragon!

It was no longer a snake, but a dragon!

The 7th Transformation of the 9 Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula! The Horned Dragon Transformation!

It was recorded in the <Accounts of Marvels>: "A young dragon with a horn is a Horned Dragon! It would have the body of a fish, the tail of a snake, patterns on its body and a horn on its head!"

In fact, this was how a dragon would look like before maturity.

Even though it was young, it was still a dragon! It was no longer like the previous fish and snakes, and it had magical properties as well! It would be able to dispel poison and give off a righteous vibe.

"The heavens are blind to let you transform into a dragon!"

The old daoist was devastated.

Dragons were the leaders of all animals. They would be able to control the weather like a real god. Any demon who would be able to transform into a dragon would be considered powerful! A demonic god! They were impressive.

To put it in another way, Fang Yuan was now eligible to become the Golden Court Dragon God based on his magical powers and his species.

It was partly fate for him to be able to achieve to this far. Cultivators would at much as possible avoid killing these dragons, for they would experience a decrease in fate energy and would have to undergo a Heavenly Tribulation themselves!

After undergoing the tribulation, Fang Yuan was now a dragon and was completely different from before!

"The heavens are fair to every living thing! Since everyone has the same treatment, why can't I become a dragon?"

With a golden glow, a young man clad in golden robes appeared; it was Fang Yuan.

But now, this was no longer his Yin Spirit. It was his actual physical body.

Higher-tiered demons would face more difficulties in trying to form a figure.

In the 9 Steps of Dragon Transformation Formula, Fang Yuan would only be able to form the human body at the 7th Transformation.

Of course, the formed figure would be a human of 15-years-old and would have decent looks, unlike those of the demons.

With a cold laugh, Fang Yuan continued. "Look at you. You are with the people dao, and yet you are afraid that others would have a share of karma. You say that the heavens are unfair but in fact, it is you people who are selfish! The people dao are losers!"

The old daoist and the leftover child looked at Fang Yuan as their heart shook.

In that instant, they felt as though they were the ones in the wrong.

"What a minute... this must be one of your demonic techniques! Don't be confused!"

The old daoist reacted quickly and exclaimed.

As he recited a formula, a glow covered his entire body like a bubble. This formed a defensive shield around him.

The remaining child, although a reincarnation of an elder, had not restored all of his cultivation. He was left rooted to the ground, not knowing what to do.

"Whoosh!"

Fang Yuan would not let this chance go to waste. With a finger, the Water-Fire Dual Sword Array flew out, forming a sword array and trapping the child. He released the sword essence from both swords and in that instant, a green spiritual sword fell to the ground and vibrated.

"You..."

Seeing Fang Yuan walking up to pick up both the Purple Sword and Green Sword, the old daoist was infuriated. Both swords were still vibrating but were well in Fang Yuan's control. The old daoist spat out a mouthful of blood and was enraged.

Although these two children were reincarnations of elders with cultivations in spiritual swords, their powers were now restricted and instead, they had lost both spiritual treasures.

"Demon! How dare you take my sect's flying swords?"

The old daoist was anxious and with the wave of his sleeves, two streaks of black rope flew towards Fang Yuan. They were like black snakes as they wrapped around the Purple Sword and Green

Sword.

Not just that, the old daoist continued to recite a formula in an attempt to re-ignite the two swords.

"These heavenly treasures belong to those who have them... Now that I have them, they are mine!"

Fang Yuan laughed heartily.

Since they were enemies now, how could he return them their weapons?

From the time he had killed Venerable Clear Wind, the tussle between the sect and him had already begun. Only one side could be left standing.

Thinking about this, Fang Yuan quickly used his karma flowers. As they were being consumed, the resistance from both swords started to reduce.

"What treasures!"

Fang Yuan was overjoyed. "Don't think about having these two swords back!"

Chapter 293: The Encounter

Fang Yuan had successfully transformed into a dragon and had absorbed more than half of the Dragon Pearl within him. Now, the power in his dragon body was surging and it was unbelievable.

The few daoists with their cultivation were now inferior to Fang Yuan.

With the wave of his hands, the sword essences of the fire and water sword exploded. The two black ropes disintegrated in the sky.

"You!"

In shock, the jade around the old daoist waist started to glitter and a glow emerged, covering him.

"Whoosh!"

With the rumbling of thunder, a White Bone Evil Slaying Sword shot out like an arrow and pierced through his forehead. The shocking sword essence shattered his elemental clone.

"Bang!"

The headless corpse of the old daoist fell to the ground and dyed the ground with his black-coloured blood.

"Hehe... I'm afraid these 3 daoists are among the powerful ones in Xuan Zhen Sect! Would this be enough to be considered as a strong blow to Xuan Zhen Sect?"

Fang Yuan thought to himself.

After killing these 3 daoists, it would affect his karma, but that didn't matter.

This was because he had already transformed into a dragon and his ability alone would be able to overcome the loss of fate energy. Therefore, killing these 3 daoists were nothing.

Looking at his stats window, Fang Yuan realised that there was a tremendous change:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Race: Horned Dragon

Essence: 36

Spirit: 36

Magic: 40

Profession: ???

Cultivation: ???

Technique: \[Nine Steps of Dragon Transformation Technique (7th Transformation)\], \[Weather Controlling Technique (Grade 1)\], \[Natural Magical Strength (Grade 3)\], \[8 Gates Sword Array (3rd Sword) (2%)\]

Skill: \[Medicine (Level 3)\], \[Botany (Level 5)\]"

"My current stats are about the same as my true stats in the world I belong to. My Magic has been restored to how it was due to the fact that I had used karma to restore the link with my actualised dream world... Has Grade 5 of the Water Controlling Technique evolved to Weather Controlling Technique?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin and glanced at his techniques before letting out a sigh. "Or should I say... Grade 5 is a stage in itself and after achieving a breakthrough, there will be changes to the technique. Since my skill is in Botany, should I expect something to change after achieving a breakthrough in it?"

At this point in time, he was extremely sure that if he were to achieve the 8th Transformation to become a water dragon, the cultivation of his incarnation would surpass his actual cultivation level.

This was nothing much though; the greater his abilities, the better he would be able to reap from this world.

There was a tinge of excitement on Fang Yuan's face. "Who would've thought that time would pass quicker in this world after the tribulation! This is indeed fate for me to enter the realm at the correct time!"

Originally, he planned to kill his way to achieve the next transformation but now, he was living in the moment he had been waiting for!

With a happy heart, he started to scavenge for loots. Both the child daoists had nothing on them, but the elder daoist had a few treasures with him, especially the piece of jade around his waist.

After keeping it, Fang Yuan shot his finger out. The flames from his sword essence erupted, incinerating the 3 corpses into ashes.

"Xu Ren has done a good job... Has he been appointed the Prefecture Minister already? There's Xu Ting as well. He is 18 this year and should be experiencing a tribulation soon..."

He rushed towards the prefecture city in a hurry.

Previously as a Giant Venomous Snake, he would give off a demonic vibe wherever he go. Now, as a dragon, he could go anywhere and people would welcome his auspicious vibe.

...

Golden Lake Prefecture, Prefecture City.

Next to the Xu Family Mansion, Fang Yuan sat by a roadside stall, took out some money and bought himself a pot of tea and a few dim sum. Heartily, he started to indulge.

In his consciousness, he started to retrieve the memories of his incarnation for the past 10 years.

"The powerful countries of the people dao would be Da Chu, where Xu Ren is at, Da Qi and Da Liang... Da Chu is experiencing a downfall now with the death of her previous king. The new king is only 8-years-old and power still lies in the ministers around him.

With the weakening of the Imperial Court and the natural disasters that are happening, Da Chu is in a mess... The Imperial Court will have no choice but to take things into their own hands and take Da Chu back!"

"Golden Court Prefecture... It is still quite prosperous but unfortunately, it is a few towns away from the Imperial Court and the Imperial Court will have difficulties helping the prefecture. Therefore, it seems as though the prefecture is governing itself..."

This was the time.

However, as the people dao became stronger, the fact that there were involvements of demons meant that things were much more complicated.

"Under Xu Ren, the evil gods in Golden Lake Prefecture have been cleared and the emergence of the few righteous god like Golden Court Dragon God ensured that support was given entirely to the people dao. Therefore, there have been fewer cases of evil demons wrecking havoc..."

"On the other hand, in the An River and Qi Lake, the demons have become increasingly rampant. Could the demons have known of the trend of the world and could this be their response to it?"

Of course, there were intellectual demons among them and Fang Yuan felt that things wouldn't be as simple as they seem.

"Looking at things now, the king is young and the time is ripe. If he doesn't take any action now, he would miss out on a golden opportunity..."

Although Fang Yuan's incarnation was living in seclusion for the past few years, it had received messages from Li Luan. From there, Fang Yuan could deduce and predict the happenings of the upcoming tribulation.

"Things will have to come together after splitting, and split after coming together... Looking at the state of Da Chu and the fact that

Da Qi and Da Liang did not invade Da Chu meant that both Da Qi and Da Liang are having their own domestic problems as well. If there were to be an uprising of a dragon, Da Chu could have its peace restored and could even take over Da Qi and Da Liang. Fate energies would surge everywhere and the people dao would prosper!"

Fang Yuan thought silently to himself.

Of course, the dragon might not appear in Da Chu. As long as it would appear anywhere with people and civilisation, things could still happen.

With the emergence of dragons and other demons, there were too many factors, too much for Fang Yuan's experience to comprehend.

"Guest?"

As he was deep in thought, he attracted the attention of many passers-by. The stall owner walked up to Fang Yuan, confused.

"I am waiting for someone! You don't have to serve me!"

Without thought, he waved his hands and smiled. The person he was waiting for had arrived.

"Hiss..."

Following the direction in which Fang Yuan was looking at, the stall owner took a glance and saw a 15-year-old young woman walking out from the Xu Family Mansion. As she came out, she was stunned and speechless.

"Greetings brother, I am Li Luan!"

This lady was indeed Li Luan. However, compared to how she was before, there was a huge difference.

As they exchanged their greetings, both of them were shocked at each other.

Li Luan was shocked at Fang Yuan's successful transformation

and the fact that he no longer had any demonic vibes, but the vibe of a majestic dragon. Her senses told her that Fang Yuan had the same vibe as her father, who was also a dragon!

Of course, just by her eyesight alone, she was unable to deduce that Fang Yuan had successfully transformed into a dragon; she could only tell that he had tremendous improvement in his cultivation.

Fang Yuan was stunned by the fact that Li Luan had a physical body.

"Who would've thought... that you can undergo a successful reincarnation and become a human!"

With the flick of his finger, he segregated the both of them from the rest with a spell before commenting.

He was right! The lady before him was a true physical human, not a demon!

Li Luan must have gave up in being a demon and went into a pregnant lady to be born after 10 months. In this way, she could have a physical human body and this was similar to the two children from Xuan Zhen Sect.

"No wonder they cannot do anything to you!"

Fang Yuan was initially confused. Even with Xu Ren's protection, there were many highly-skilled humans who would not allow her to even come close to the Xu Family.

He wouldn't have guessed that she would have the resolution to reincarnate into a human!

"This is nothing much. After all... I have been following the Xu Family for all these years. With your help, I have slowly understood fate... The uprising of the people dao is indeed heaven's intention, so why go against it?"

Li Luan spoke calmly but Fang Yuan could feel that she was still

hiding something.

After a long while of silence, Li Luan continued. "Are you here for..."

To her, Fang Yuan was always mysterious and the past few times, she realised that he was a cruel person who would strike fear in many.

If not for all that had happened, she would not want to be associated with Fang Yuan.

"I want to meet Xu Ren! The time is ripe and he should strike now!"

Although Fang Yuan was composed, it felt as though he was shouting into Li Luan's ear.

"Alright, I will relay your message to him!"

She understood what he meant. With a pale face, she gritted her teeth and stood up.

"Yu!"

At this point in time, a few horses arrived at the door of Xu Family Mansion. The few servants at the doors passionately exclaimed, "My Lord has arrived!"

"Mmm!"

A young man leapt down from the horse. He was nimble and had sharp facial features. He was rather handsome.

Seeing Li Luan walking over to him restlessly, the young man threw his horse whip. "Luan'er, what happened?"

Seeing how anxious he was, it was obvious that he was related to Li Luan.

"No... Nothing much!"

Li Luan blushed. Seeing how Xu Ting wanted to help her tidy her hair, she avoided him and ran into the mansion.

"What happened?"

Xu Ting was stunned. As he looked across, a servant went up to him and whispered something into his ear. Soon, he glared at Fang Yuan.

'Hehe... Could this young kid have fallen for her? What is Li Luan doing?'

Fang Yuan was confused. 'No... Not right. As a demon, there would be simpler ways to mess with the humans! Li Luan has become close with the Xu Family and would probably have intertwined her fate with the family... Although I've helped Xu Family in the past, If I were to get myself involved this time, I would reveal my identity...'

He had the premonition that things would not go smoothly this time.

At the same time, he was on guard; things were unpredictable here.

"My Lord, old master is inviting him in!"

Li Luan quickly rushed out. Seeing this, she tugged on Xu Ting's sleeve; she didn't want them to fight.

"Since my father wants to see him, let him come in!"

Xu Ting felt down and appeared depressed.

Fang Yuan swung his robe and entered, registering this young man's minute expression.

'Jealousy? Confusion? Hatred? Interesting... Only with such a chess piece will I be able to enjoy a good game of chess!'

Chapter 294: Calculations

"Greetings, Master Xu!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand and sat down unceremoniously before sizing Xu Ren up.

They had not met for 15 years. The upright angry youth who was worried about the country and his people then had turned into an expressionless two-faced middle aged man. Not a hint of anger could be found upon his face even though Fang Yuan was so disrespectful. It was clear that Xu Ren was shrewd which caused Fang Yuan to feel that the flow of time had been cruel.

"It seems like my lord is here!"

Xu Ren looked at Fang Yuan's youthful features and felt a sense of regret. He gave another solemn bow, "I would like to thank you once again for your great help in the past! What other teachings do you have for me this time? If you have any use for me, I would not hesitate to go through great lengths to help!"

Fang Yuan remained expressionless after hearing this. However, he laughed coldly in his heart.

Using his spiritual sense, Fang Yuan could already sense the hidden room that was concealed in the study room.

Within this antique study room, 8 skilled martial artists were hiding. There were also another two magic masters outside!

Furthermore, the 8 martial artists were full of killing intent. It was obvious that they had killed many others before. They had trained their essence and magic to the point where even demons and ghosts were afraid of them.

With an order, the study room could turn into a battlefield. Even though Fang Yuan was capable of the 5th or 6th transformation at that time, it would be troublesome for him to kill Xu Ren when he was surrounded.

Needless to say, after the Xu Family relocated here, they had amassed their power and had many links with other martial artists. It would not be difficult for him to call up hundreds of loyal soldiers.

This was Heaven's will.

'It seems like Xu Ren has truly grown up!'

Fang Yuan thought solemnly but said, "I would not dare... You have the protection of Fate. I am here this time to ask you if you will act now that the time is ripe."

"Fate?"

Xu Ren was shocked. He waved his hand in the direction of Northwest. "I, Xu Ren, am an official of the court. I must naturally be loyal to the king..."

He stopped in the middle of the sentence as he saw Fang Yuan's smile and could not continue.

He now remembered that the opponent was a demon! He would not fall for this type of trick. Xu Ren fell silent and nodded his head.

He finally spoke after a long time had passed. "The previous king did me a huge favour. I was not willing to scheme against his country at first. However, this concerns my race and as such, even if I am unwilling, I must try my best in order for my people to be happy!"

It seemed that after one had been in the court for long, he would learn to use the glorious banner of People Dao as an excuse and a cause to conceal his disloyalty and plans for a revolt.

Fang Yuan nodded although he knew that it was a lie.

Whether there was such a cause, was another situation altogether. Fang Yuan could tell that Xu Ren was intelligent.

Fang Yuan was clear about it ever since Xu Ren moved his entire

race here and spread the word to raise sacrificial knights.

"How do you intend to do it?"

Fang Yuan asked again.

The current magistrate, Kou Wei, is very old and sick. He is retiring soon and I have made preparations to take over his post and strengthen my base..."

Xu Ren's face twitched, but he still told Fang Yuan his plan.

Afterall, there were no outsiders in the house. His bodyguards were all sacrificial knights who were all extremely loyal.

"If that is the case, we will lose time!"

Fang Yuan scoffed upon hearing what Xu Ren said.

The tribulations were only taking place these few years and yet, Xu Ren wanted to idly wait for the magistrate to retire? After all, he was not the hidden dragon but merely his father. He had lost his fearless spirit and the courage to usurp everything and start again.

"Then, according to your intention, I should act now?"

Xu Ren laughed. He had made up his mind to kill the demon in front of him on the spot if it were to suggest that to him!

Afterall, Da Chu was weakened. Even if they mustered troops to revolt, they would only perish.

"Not necessarily!"

Fang Yuan smiled. "Do you still remember your wishes in the past?"

Xu Ren absentmindedly remembered the past when he was still a hot-blooded youth. He had the ambition to rule the country and make it peaceful for the people. "The Golden Lake Prefecture has 2 evils, which are the evil gods and the pirates!"

After a few years of purging the evil gods, there were not much of them left.

Only the pirates, who advanced and retreated like the wind, were left. They usually hid within the Golden Court Lake like water droplets in the sea and were extremely skilled in battles on water.

Furthermore, the natural and man-made disasters in the other prefectures had resulted in the victims seeking refuge at the Golden Court Lake, which gave the pirates an endless stream of backups.

Although Xu Ren had sent his troops to stomp out the pirates and have even achieved a decisive victory, the pirates came back not long after like how the spring wind brought along life during springtime.

According to his calculations, there was only hope in removing the pirates if he occupy the surround prefectures around the Golden Lake Prefecture and govern them together.

"Unless, you make this trip today because you have a plan to exterminate the pirates?"

Xu Ren asked joyfully.

"How did the officials handle the situation after capturing the pirates the past few times?"

Fang Yuan played around with the teacup and spoke frankly with the official. With this kind of temperament, Xu Ren could not help but felt that even his talented son could not match Fang Yuan.

After pondering, he replied, "The leader of the pirates are executed while the rest are relocated. However, I do not have much land in the Golden Lake Prefecture and am unable to relocate all of them. As such, there were many repeat offenders!""

"Previously, you were working within the constraints of being in the local authority and could only do so much. But now, by thinking out of the box, wouldn't you have everything? The Golden Lake Prefecture has always been focused on the development of the military. Wouldn't this make an excellent

source for soldiers?

Fang Yuan smiled as he presented his idea.

Truth be told, all these were made by Heaven's will for Xu Ting.

If not, how would he manage to rise up the ranks so easily?

"Converting the pirates to become soldiers? Once the quota is exceeded, it would be no different from openly revolting..."

Xu Ren pondered for a while and felt that Fang Yuan had not fully expressed himself. He could not help but stand up and gave a deep bow, "Please enlighten me!"

He could not help but feel that the same scenario played out many years ago when he made the decision to exterminate the evil gods!

"There are many waterways in Da Chu. After training them, these pirates will make a topnotch navy...Furthermore, they owe their lives to you and would be loyal to you!"

Truth be told, the navy was just a supplement to the cause. What Fang Yuan really meant was that Da Chu had existed for hundreds of years. The rules of the king had greatly affected the people. If one is to stage a revolution, even with the support of his people, there was an 80% chance of failure. At this time and age, the king's influence was unbelievable.

As such, if the revolution really took place, there would be little support.

However, the pirates were lawless. They were the people who killed the officials and went against the law. They would be fiercely loyal if they were able to lead a better life and saved from the harsh seas.

They would not hesitate to go against the heavens. This was the type of mentality that the revolutionary army needed!

"Well..."

Xu Ren understood immediately and was moved.

In any rebellion, if the people's minds were not resolute, once shaken, there would be spies and the army would be defeated.

The Imperial Court had been awe-inspiring for many years. There were few who would dare to usurp everything.

However, there were no shortage of people within the pirates who were willing and dare to bring down the king.

It would certainly be advantageous to him if he manage to recruit the help of the pirates.

Most importantly, he would be able to hide the troops within the lake where they would not be seen or heard unless when called upon. Once called upon, they would be able to occupy the waterways and attack the other prefectures. The chances of catching the others off-guard and unprepared was very high.

If that was the case, he would be able to act immediately with great confidence that he would be able to annex the region.

If he had time on his side...ruling the world would not just be a dream!

"You have enlightened me with your words!"

Xu Ren immediately kowtowed, tears flowing from his eyes, "I am able to reach where I am today due to your help many years ago. I am willing to build a shrine in my family house and offer sacrifices throughout the four seasons. I hope you would not decline my suggestion!"

Up till now, he still believed that Fang Yuan was a Black Dragon General that was sealed and a god.

"Haha...This is all Heaven's will. Do you think I came up with this plan?"

Fang Yuan laughed before leaving.

With a flash of golden light, he disappeared without a trace.

Upon witnessing this scene, Xu Ren's face darkened and he mulled for a long time before clapping his hands. "Come out!"

"My lord!"

The wall behind the study room opened and two men walked out. They kneeled down respectfully.

"This matter...this is a top secret, I presume you know the rules?"

Xu Ren laughed coldly.

"Rest assured, my lord, this matter will not spread. If any rumours leak out, I will be held accountable!"

The martial artists knew the weight of the situation. They solemnly kowtowed, their scalps dark red in colour.

"I naturally trust you all. You all can go now!"

Xu Ren waved his hand and allowed the martial artists to retreat before looking towards Wen Sheng. "Shen Changhe, you are the mastermind. What do you think of this plan?"

This scribe was dressed in green robes and was around 30 years old. He was in his prime and appeared scholarly. He was full of confidence, and after overhearing what was said, he said, "My lord, I overhead the conversation just now. After consideration, I feel that this plan is remarkable. Hiding the troops in the lake. Once there are changes, we can completely control the surrounding 5 prefectures and immediately create the atmosphere to..."

"The most crucial element is still to capture the pirates in the right and just way so that no one can find fault in my doings!"

"Yes!"

Xu Ren stroked his beard. It was obvious that he was very satisfied.

"It is just that...who will spearhead this operation?"

He looked towards Shen Changhe and asked.

Shen Changhe shuddered and broke out in cold sweat. He immediately kowtowed and said, "As the official, even if the magistrate has washed his hand of this matter, it would be best to avoid implications. However, you can send young master!"

"The young master has already become a scholar. If he were to perform this task, he would be awarded the post of a 9th grade official with the power to investigate in every county, and may even become the substitute district lieutenant..."

The power to control the troops was a heavy responsibility. As the mastermind, Shen Changhe would not be so foolish as to get himself implicated.

Truth be told, recommending Xu Ting was the only option.

"Hmmm...the world is in a mess. So what if he becomes a scholar? It would be better for him to become an official directly. I will go speak to Ting'er..."

Xu Ren could not help but smile when he thought of his son.

The responsibility of improving the family's social status in the future lied with his talented son.

Chapter 295: Dragon Palace

"The immeasurable!"

In a small temple, the chief Daoist walked out of the room where he was conducting morning classes. He gazed silently in the direction of the Golden Lake Prefecture.

This Daoist was named Qing Xuan, and was in his fifties. His hair was half white, and his complexion was often a healthy pink. He was full of vitality.

However, at this point in time, his face was ash grey as he stared at the reddish skies.

His heart felt as though it was going through a storm.

'The convergence of fate energy, the gathering of an evil aura, this smells of war...the Xu family wants to rebel...'

This was expected, and his sect had invested in this too.

"But according to the plan, wasn't it up to the three grandmasters to advise the head of the Xu family, and subsequently claim all the credit? Why did they act so early?"

This had resulted in a loss and would inevitably compromise the great scheme of things.

"Could it have been the Carp spirit?"

Daoist Qing Xuan pondered, and his eyes were cold.

"I wanted to let her off, seeing that she had already reincarnated into a human being, and also had the protection of dragon aura. Who would've known that she would betray her master? She must be destroyed!"

In truth, if it was only to aid the Dragon Court, it was alright to sacrifice karma and fate.

But the most important consideration was that, this demon was

close to the headquarters, and if she antagonised him one day, his investment would most probably fail.

"I doubt that a little demon like her would be this bold..."

The Daoist Qing Xuan pinched his fingers in an attempt at divination, but found the fates difficult to read. He was baffled.

"Although it was destined that our forefathers fought hard for the rise of People Dao...but it remains unclear as to who will have the last laugh when disaster strikes. Although my cultivation in both energy and divination techniques is solid, but I remain confused. Only the three grandmasters..."

"Wait!"

Thinking about the three grandmasters today had put a chill in his heart.

"According to my sect's prophecy, the grandmaster should have arrived, but why hasn't he? Demon hunting is no matter. In the Golden Lake Prefecture, which demon other than the Dragon God would be able to face the combined forces of the three grandmasters together with their purple and green swords?"

"Chirp"

At this time, a green light flashed in the skies, and a little green bird landed on a prune tree in the garden. It continued to twitter and chirp.

"This is..."

The Daoist Qingxuan flicked his fingers, and an enchantment was created. His face was extremely solemn.

"What happened exactly? To the extent where the sect has to activate the green bird messenger?"

As Qing Xuan recited some chants, a spiritual aura fell over the green bird.

"Chirp"

The green bird's large beady eyes turned green for a moment, and it opened its mouth to speak. The voice was an old one.

"Qing Xuan! In the Grandmasters' Hall, the jade tablets of the three grandmasters have all broken at the same time, and they are probably in a bad situation. You shall investigate this covertly. Be careful, and remember to not act rashly!"

"What?"

The green bird was not an intelligent animal to begin with, and after uttering the last word, it reverted to the simple beast it was and started to peck its feathers. It was oblivious to Qing Xuan's terror.

"The jade tablets of the Grandmasters' Hall is a secret feature of our sect. The spiritual wills of sect elders will be accumulated on the tablets. Three tablets cracking at the same time can only mean that all three grandmasters have met with harm...could it be the work of the Golden Court Dragon God?"

There were no other possibilities that he could think of.

This problem, coupled with the disturbances in the Xu family's dragon aura, caused him to break out in sweat.

"The forces that the sect has put in place in the Golden Lake Prefecture cannot be entirely activated, but we should not leave them hanging either..."

Daoist Qing Xuan paced back and forth, deep in thought.

"I won't alert the rest, except for the spy in the Xu family. I will send them a message to find out what exactly happened..."

Except that he could not dig too deep or risk disturbing the dragon aura, which could cause things to turn ugly.

It would compromise investigative efforts if that happened.

However, if he put in effort, there would definitely be results.

The reports came in at nighttime.

"Lord Xu intends to send an army to deal with the pirates in the Golden Court Lake?"

The room was dark save for a tiny light. The Daoist Qing Xuan analysed the situation.

"The Golden Court Lake was vast, with countless of small islands. To clear them all was no small feat...also, there were some heroic figures among the pirates who must not be underestimated..."

In truth, Qing Xuan understood that the Golden Court Lake was a god-given chance for the Xu family to grow their power.

Their decision to act now also meant that the odds were in their favour.

Qing Xuan turned to the messenger angrily.

"This is a serious matter. You must report back to the sect immediately. Our people have to participate in this too...or we will lose a great opportunity."

He looked towards the flame ponderously.

Qing Xuan did not have the means to continue investigating the fate of the three grandmasters . He had to appeal to the sect for help.

Fang Yuan was not in the mood.

He went to the water's edge and moved his body slightly. A layer of water vapour materialised and lingered about the surroundings. The light rays were reflected into different colours. This was a special occurrence.

"A horned dragon has power over water, and also has the ability to control the weather..."

Fang Yuan took a step forward and there was a flash of golden light. He had transformed into a horned dragon, and dashed towards the blue skies.

"Huff"

The winds had risen and the clouds were gathering. The sky was darkening. Before long, rain began to fall.

"The horned dragon can master the elements, which is a prodigious ability! The other major demons will never be able to achieve this..."

As Fang Yuan traversed the clouds, he was experiencing something entirely new to him.

"Following the transformation into a horned dragon, one can manipulate all the water vapour in the immediate area. He is no different from a water god!"

Of course, being the youngest dragon around meant that his powers were still very much limited.

Additionally, Fang Yuan had no intention of causing storms and floods, and thus flew about carefully trying to familiarise himself with the art of weather control.

"A good rain knows its season, and comes when spring is here...in truth, this is the limitation of a horned dragon. To create real storms that affect a large area would require one to become a water dragon!"

The horned dragon was a junior dragon, but the water dragon was powerful and was always accompanied by the winds and rain.

"A pity...I've only managed to progress to the 8th step in the 9-Step Dragon Transformation Technique. The most crucial step is the True Dragon Transformation!"

The water dragon was powerful, but was no match for the true dragon.

The water dragons were numerous, like the various lords of the mortal world. But there could only be One True Dragon, just like how there was only one emperor.

As his thoughts wandered, Fang Yuan could not help but examine his luck and karma.

Dealing with Xu Ren had triggered the recovery of his People Dao Karma, which was previously down by half.

Of course, an evil aura was gathering, which was the backlash created from trying to change the general trend.

"Who cares if I am to be dealt with with tribulations...it cannot be out of the blue...with my skills in magic, no one can challenge me in the Golden Court manor . The Daoist Xuan Zhen knew that the revenge plan would take a lot of plan, which leaves one more possibility!"

Fang Yuan's eyes gleamed. He had no intention of slowing down, and the rain began to spread to the edges of the Golden Court Lake.

From the torrents of water rose a water demon mounted on a black fish.

"Who is the one causing such a great disturbance? Do you not know that this is the territory of our Dragon God?"

If Fang Yuan could create such a turbulence, the water demon should rightfully show him some respect.

But the water demon defied expectations and raged on. Following a wave of its arm, a jet of water shot up into the skies.

"Insolence!"

Fang Yuan swung his tail and the water jet fell apart immediately.

Not only that, but he willed the lake waters to become turbulent. The water film formed a bubble and levitated into the air.

The water demon was frightened and was trapped in the bubble like an insect in amber.

Fang Yuan examined it with interest. He had every intention to kill it.

'Hmm...this must be the workings of karma and fate, altering the potential of opportunities to confuse the mind?'

If it was a native, he would definitely be irritated, kill the water demon in one blow and begin a massacre. This would foster an enmity with the Dragon God.

Although this was the worst case scenario, it was a highly probable result.

But Fang Yuan was different!

Gods and spirits from another world had high resistance towards the temptations of fate.

"You actually dared to challenge me, water demon."

Fang Yuan released the demon partially from the water prison, and revealed his true dragon form. He then asserted his authority.

"My...my lord?"

The water demon was terrified.

The dragon was the lord of all water beings, born to be a king.

The water demon had disrespected a dragon and knew that his actions were treasonous. No words could express the fear it was experiencing at the moment.

At this point, Fang Yuan felt a tinge of regret. It was unlike him to be provoked so easily.

"I was playful and did not realise that I was trespassing. This is partially my fault. This, I will spare you. Go report my arrival to the Dragon God, now!"

Following a nod from Fang Yuan, the water demon dived into the deep and disappeared from sight.

In truth, these were but Fang Yuan's excuses.

Knowing that the tribulations were impending, he acted first to bring the ball into his court. This was a useful method.

Like what happened just now. With a clear plan, one would be become more reserved in their actions.

Otherwise, following the activation of heaven's will, one will still suffer. Without any preparation, the effects would be more profound.

Before long, a swirl formed in the water. Water beings formed two rows, and a turtle appeared. It bowed down solemnly.

"My lord the Dragon God, upon finding out that a fellow dragon has come to visit, was extremely happy. May I invite you to join us in for a gathering at the Dragon Palace!"

"Mm lead the way!"

Fang Yuan was intent on finding out more about the Dragon God of Golden Court Lake. He dived into the water and appeared as his human self. He then sat on the back of a large turtle.

"Yes, let your old servant lead the way!"

The turtle was obsequious and pointed out the road ahead.

The turtle race was related to the dragon race, and yet it was very difficult for turtles to cultivate the dragon form. Most of them were loyal followers of the Dragon God, and looked forward to the day where he could become a true dragon and elevate them together with him.

Now that the turtle had met a young dragon in Fang Yuan, it considered him a master too and decided that it would not compromise on the formalities.

The turtle was a sturdy creature, but yet moved at an alarmingly fast speed in the water. Before long, a glittering place of gold and jade appeared before Fang Yuan's eyes.

Chapter 296: The Patrol

The Dragon Palace was opulently grandeur and precious materials lined the floors and walls. Even though it was the most grandiose palace Fang Yuan had ever seen, he was unamused as he had seen similarly magnificent palaces before.

The tortoise guard was caught off guard by Fang Yuan's indifference.

"My master is the richest amongst all in the seas and this palace is home to many treasures of Golden Court Lake; even the previous visitor, the Monkey God, was in utter awe of the palace. Yet, I can't believe unlike others, you are so indifferent to such opulence! Perhaps, you are from the seas?"

With greater reverence, the tortoise guard led Fang Yuan inside a large plaza.

Inside the plaza, a black water dragon opened its eye.

"Leave him here and the rest of you all are dismissed!" he ordered with a powerful demeanour.

"Yes, your majesty!"

With the Golden Court Dragon God's command, all the water dwellers solemnly and respectfully retreated.

However, Fang Yuan's expression changed suddenly as he gazed at the black water dragon. "This can't be right..., that's not his true form!"

"Splash!"

Under the soft noise of water splashing, it was as though the mirage was dispelled by water.

Akin to a soap bubble bursting, the humongous body of the black evil dragon suddenly disappeared and left behind a majestic deity. The deity was donned in a royal crown and had two dragon horns

coming out of his forehead.

"God Dao Golden Body!"

Fang Yuan was in awe and paid respects again, "It is my honour to meet you!"

The golden body was cast from the beliefs of the people dao and possessed boundless powers that were even greater than that of the dragon body.

Unfortunately, it was after all built from the intangible beliefs of the people dao and was not bound by flesh.

"So the Golden Court Dragon God's true form is actually a people dao deity!" he thought.

It was a sudden realization for Fang Yuan as all his doubts were cleared at once. "No wonder the clearing of the evil gods' offerings went so smoothly, behind those righteous gods, there was help from this greater god!"

"Ah, no need for formalities!"

The Dragon God raised his hands slightly and a surge of force lifted Fang Yuan.

"I have been paying attention to you for a long time!"

The Dragon God smiled and continued, "I welcome you inside to talk!"

The two of them then entered the palace hall behind the plaza.

The palace hall was colossal. It had forty-nine sturdy golden pillars supporting a golden dome roof. Above it, ripples of water could be seen and it was truly a sight to behold.

"This is the heart of my Dragon Palace, Blue Water Hall! Whatever we discuss here cannot be leaked, and it can even conceal secrets and mislead those who try to predict!"

He then sat on his main seat and gestured towards Fang Yuan,

"Have a seat too!"

Fang Yuan sat on the Fire Jade Coral Chair and felt warm and comfortable.

At that moment, a puzzled expression appeared on his face. "Paid attention to me for a long time? Have we met before...?"

"Ah, I have been noticing you ever since you destroyed the Monkey God's magical clone. However, I was busy doing my dragon transformation and was too wary of you. Hence, even though I thought of inviting you many times, it is such a pity I ended up backing out every time..."

The Dragon God grinned, "Also, about that Black Dragon General's Temple of yours? I was also the one who sent people to tidy it, else people would have stopped visiting and providing offerings..."

It was all clear to Fang Yuan.

The Golden Court Dragon God was in charge of all the water deities in the surrounding radius of Golden Court Lake, he must have noticed Fang Yuan since that period.

But was he biased towards the humans since then?

Fang Yuan was even more certain that he could achieve his goals during this trip.

Initially, he simply wanted to meet him first while transformed as a horned dragon and then look for more information later on.

However, he could now complete it in one step.

"This Dragon God's water dragon incarnation is already destroyed, what's left is just the embodiment of people's beliefs. He can be influenced the most easily now, and there's no doubt he is biased towards the humans." Fang Yuan thought.

Fang Yuan stood up and bowed, "Thank you Dragon God! However, I have a favour to ask of you!"

"Go ahead!"

The Golden Court Dragon God gestured.

Although he was already a people dao deity, his heart was still influenced by his previous form. Thus, he had a warmer attitude towards this fellow horned dragon.

"The prefecture minister of Golden Lake Prefecture, Xu Ren, deeply pities the commoners' tough life and furthermore, pirates are rampant over there. He wants to eradicate those pirates but however, the Golden Court Lake is so vast with thousands of islands. So please, I seek your helping hand, Dragon God!"

Fang Yuan narrated Xu Ren's situation and added, "If you help out the commoners of Golden Court Lake, they would be tremendously grateful for your benevolence!"

"Ah, even if you did not mention this matter, I was already prepared to do so!"

The Golden Court Dragon God stroked his beard with satisfaction.

As a people dao deity, it was beneficial for him to maintain both the peace and stability of the environment and a large number of believers.

"As a righteous god, I, the Golden Court Lake Dragon God, would definitely know the hiding locations of all those pirates... Just that gods and humans should not interact too closely, hence, I still require a human aide!"

The Golden Court Dragon God exclaimed with radiance in his eyes, "You! How about you?"

"Of course I can!"

Fang Yuan laughed; he knew that he had successfully established rapport with the Dragon God.

"In his eyes, we are very much alike... both born as dragons, both

sensed great tribulations, both wanted to help the people dao... unlike humans and their infighting.... Of course, perhaps the Golden Court Dragon God's does not require a lot of karma points, solely relying on self-sustenance, unlike those of Xuan Zhen Sect who consumed so much and fought with others who vied for it too..." Fang Yuan thought.

"Ah, it is my privilege to have you as my guest! I have already informed my subordinates to prepare a grand feast for you tonight!"

The Golden Court Dragon God nodded, his divine gaze momentarily faded as he chatted like any other noblemen, "You must enjoy a couple of drinks tonight!"

"Of course!"

As they spoke, Fang Yuan began to wonder about the entertainment the Dragon Palace provided and he inevitably expressed his curiosity.

It was normal for someone with such a high cultivation level to be so direct.

"Hahaha..., great!"

The Dragon God was elated. He clapped his hands and two groups of gorgeous shell ladies swarmed out. Behind them were water dwellers carrying an array of delicacies.

Spiritual meals that could be eaten by both humans and Yin Spirits were consumed in the Dragon Palace.

Although it was not very useful for Fang Yuan, it was eye-opening for him and he enjoyed his time with the host.

...

Spring, 3rd Year of Yong An, Da Chu.

At the pier of Black Lake District.

Xu Ting stood on top of two ships and behind him were soldiers.

The soldiers were fully geared and carried a faint sense of ferocity.

As he looked at the ships and the soldiers, he was very satisfied.

At that time, Xu Ting was already a ninth grade official. He was assigned as Black Lake District's naval patrol officer.

As a patrol officer, he was in charge of recruiting soldiers, busting pirates, and also had the authority to set up roadblocks both on land and sea. At his current rank, he could only recruit a hundred men at most.

With help from his clan and aid from the district leader, Zhang Gui, he managed to form the troop quickly. The only thing left for the substantial troop was to test its prowess in a real war.

"Father was right, troubled times are ahead. I don't need scholarly honour, in the future, it is a brawn over brain kind of world..." he thought.

Unknowingly, Xu Ting felt melancholic as he looked at his military officer's uniform.

Black Lake District's district leader was an old friend of his father. He was very kind to Xu Ting and supplied him with all the bows, arrow, armour and food that he required.

Xu Ting still had some regrets. Once a candidate has been promoted to an official, he could no longer take the imperial examinations.

"As a man, you shall seek for respect and authority!"

As he stood at the front of the ship and faced hundreds of subordinates staunchly obeying his orders, he felt a strong sense of power and authority within him. The surge of dominance seemingly opened another door in his heart, as he felt like he had a greater ambition ahead of him.

"Eradicating the pirates of Golden Court Lake is just the part one of my grand plans, once it succeeds, my clan would at least have

the capital to have a footing in this tumultuous world..." he thought.

Although he also thought of what would happen thereafter, he quickly buried those thoughts.

At that moment, such wild ambitions were too elusive. He had to ensure his current plans succeeded first.

"Sir, we can prepare to sail now!"

The crew reported the conditions of the winds and the water to Xu Ting.

"Hoist the sails! Embark!"

As Xu Ting gave his commands, he glanced at the pier for the last time with no wistfulness.

"Raise the anchor!"

"Set sail!"

The ship's crew were all experienced seafarers. Under his command, the two ships embarked smoothly.

Also, it was an official vessel, it had a larger body, drained more water and was immaculately stable. The possibility of feeling seasick on the ship was also much smaller. Furthermore, the key areas were covered in iron sheets and the ships' defence was unparalleled.

There were two such warships and each had fifty soldiers on it. The soldiers were equipped with bows and other weapons. They were definitely a force to be reckoned with in Golden Court Lake.

"Doesn't matter if it is politicking or working, the worst thing to do is to create a big commotion right at the start. With my current status, a hundred men and two ships are ample. Anyway, we wouldn't encounter pirates throughout the whole journey and they can only have at most five hundred to a thousand of its people on those small islands. Plus, since they are mostly comprised of the

elderly, the women and the young, we would definitely be able to bust them all!"

Xu Ting was not an empty strategist, he was fully confident in his plans and envisioned, "By leading a troop of hundred, I am certain that I can conquer them all, and my power would snowball further afterwards!"

Furthermore, every time the pirates were cleaned up with his efforts, he could claim his merits from the imperial court and be promoted to receive greater power and authority.

Hence, when he finally conquered all the pirates in Golden Court Lake, his rank would be comparable to others.

"Call all the sergeants and above to come to the meeting!"

Xu Ting then issued his command as his watched the glistening waters.

The military system of Da Chu was formed on the basis that five men formed a team led by a corporal and ten men formed a team led by a sergeant.

Be it a corporal or a sergeant, both ranks were below that of a ninth grade official. However, they formed the backbone of troops and were future candidates for officers.

As he met the sergeants, Xu Ting stroked his sword and thought about how he could fully earn the loyalty of his men through leading them with both care and authority.

In this tumultuous world, one has to be fully prepared at all times, and it was even more important to have a firm grasp of one's own military power.

Such a belief was not due to distrust, it was simply due to the temperament of water dragons!

Chapter 297: Eradicating Pirates

"The 'Pirates of Golden Court Lake' is merely a collective title for the numerous different small groups of pirates in Golden Court Lake. The different groups do not work together, they even compete and clash with each other for land, wealth and women..."

Inside the small cabin, Xu Ting looked at the map and spoke with fervour.

The Xu family was rooted in Golden Lake Prefecture for ten over years, it was unsurprising that they had such intelligence in their hands.

"These pirates are mostly refugees from other areas that gather on the islands. Some of them do reclaim the land, but however, most of them rely on plundering! Some of them have even built up stockaded villages!"

In reality, due to limited resources, terrain and reclamation limitations, such stockaded villages were not large in scale and housed at most a thousand people.

Furthermore, the natural resources on the island combined with the plundered materials were still insufficient for large groups of pirates, and hence they had to branch off from one another.

"This time around, we will be conquering the pirates on Heiguan Island. These pirates have pillaged Black Lake District before, killing 27 people in the process and even raided a large family..."

Xu Ting frowned.

When the pirates were ashore, it was natural that they killed and raided. However, since they could break in these large families' estates that were fenced and fortified with tall, huge walls, it meant that the pirates were either very brave, or there were very capable people within them.

"Come, bring Hu San over!"

Immediately after he clapped his hands, two soldiers brought a man over.

From the man's frail and ragged looking appearance, it was evident that he was the poorest of the poor.

Of course, as those around were all soldiers, from the man's savage looking eyes and his body odour that reeked of seawater, they could immediately decipher his identity.

"A pirate?"

A few sergeants exchanged glances, and their face lit up.

"Haha..., not bad, he is indeed a pirate. A pirate from Heiguan Island to be exact!"

Xu Ting stroked his steel ring and mentioned, "Explain everything you know and then guide the way for us! If you heed our orders, you will be greatly rewarded and your criminal records would be expunged! How about that?"

Even though pirates were usually refugees, there were some exceptions.

Hu San was from Black Lake District, however after he committed crimes, he was wanted by the authorities. Hence, he had no other choice than to join the pirates.

Once Xu Ting assumed his post and caught wind of the matter, he immediately tasked his clan members to help him and after observing for a period of time, sure enough, Hu San was caught.

With incriminating evidence held against him, Hu San was surprisingly not stubborn, he lifted his head, and with a slightly hopeful look, said, "Are you... for real?"

"Hehe... our master is an official of the prefecture minister, why would he lie to a scoundrel like you?"

Before Xu Ting could speak, a bodyguard at the side sneered.

As the eldest son of the family, safety was of utmost importance.

This group of bodyguards were the cream of the crop, they were all skilled in combat and defence. Also, instead of leather armour, they were donned in chainmail.

The chainmail was made from metal rings looped together and was lightweight and flexible. In spite of that, its defence was much better than that of normal armour. It was costly to make such armour and was only possible for bodyguards of ninth grade officials and above to have it.

However, the chainmail was a common sight here.

As the commander's bodyguard, such treatment was expected.

Just with the five well-armed bodyguards alone, it might even be enough to kill hundreds of people!

Thus, Xu Ting did not have many worries for this conquest.

Nevertheless, preparations for the war were required. It was necessary to fully ready their tactics.

"Prefecture minister... Xu?"

Hu San took a deep breath, "Alright..., I will believe you this time!"

With fire in his eyes, Hu San explained again, "Our boss is called Lu Jia. We occupied Heiguan Island and built a stockaded village on it. There are seven to eight hundred people and three ships! There are hundred and twenty strong men called the Twelfth Jia..., and also, I know the way there and can bring you all there!"

"Good, dismiss him and give him some meat and wine!"

Xu Ting was delighted upon hearing that.

Although they had a map of the waterway, it was reassuring that an experienced person held the task of navigating the directions.

On the vast lake, there were no reference objects to navigate with. Without an experienced navigator, a small mistake could steer the ship off by a huge margin. Thus, this was also the reason

why the pirates remained uncaught till now.

...

Hu San was indeed cooperative, after a day of him pointing directions, a small island appeared in front of Xu Ting.

"Hmm, looks clean, shouldn't be some kind of snake island..."

Xu Ting happily said as he shielded his eyes from the sun, looked far away and also smelled the air.

There were thousands of island on Golden Court Lake, some of the islands were dead empty, while other had many species of animals. Reportedly, there were some islands that only had numerous species of snakes; it was truly horrifying and dangerous.

However, the island ahead did not look like such and also did not have the kind of unique stench.

"Sir!"

At that moment, a few sergeants came over, "There are a few ships berthed at the other side of the island. What Hu San said should be true! what should we do? Secretly disembark and detour over to launch a surprise attack?"

"Wait a minute!"

Xu Ting frowned, "Send the scout over first to see how many ships are there!"

At that moment, the daoist priest on the ship was put in to great use.

A white bird flew from the daoist priest's shoulder, circled the sky, landed back and started chirping away.

"Sir, there are three ships!"

The daoist priest reported moments later.

"Very good, your efforts will be remembered!"

Xu Ting was elated.

Although the daoist priest did not have many techniques under his belt, he understood animal language. Even though he only had a common kind of white bird, it always worked flawlessly in scouting. Hence, Xu Ting's father had always thought highly of the daoist priest and treated him very well.

Thus, this time around, Xu Ting brought along the daoist priest to help out himself.

And that was exactly how noble families worked.

With those, as long as the commander was not too incompetent, there was no reason to fail.

"So how Sir, should we launch a sneak attack?"

A few sergeants eagerly wanted to try.

"What sneak attack?"

Xu Ting took a few steps and made up his mind, "Our soldiers are so much more superior, we have plenty of weapons and armours, and our ship is fortified with iron! Whereas, they only have three lousy ships, do you think they even stand a chance? Also, all of us are unfamiliar with the island's terrain, it would not be wise to solely trust one person!"

"We are soldiers, they are thieves! We don't need any devious plans, we just have to raise our flag up high and charge forward... With their three ships, where else can they run after we occupy the pier?"

While the plan seemed simple, it was one that was meticulously devised.

"In this first war, I rather win it clumsily than to lose skillfully. If my plan is infallible, that would be the best!"

Xu Ting quietly told himself.

"Raise the official flag!"

"Prepare the spearguns!"

"Speed up and charge forward!"

...

After listening to Xu Ting's arrangements, the sergeants were not against it.

After all, they were also clear that the pirates did not have much power to defend the pier. The pirates were no match for them.

Furthermore, they were backed by bodyguards and the daoist priest.

Truthfully, it was sufficient to fully suppress the pirates just with this elite force.

With such an overwhelming strength, the morale was high.

"Charge!"

The two warships instantly charged towards the pier aggressively, alarming its people.

Frankly, the pier was actually just a few shoddy structures built on a natural harbour. The ships could barely be berthed there.

Three old and dilapidated fishing boats parked at the side of the shore. They appeared modified of sorts and had numerous fishermen climbing up and down, fixing the sails and tidying the ship.

A ruckus erupted when they saw the two ships carrying the official flag charged towards them.

Not only were their boats difficult to operate, it took a very long time for them to gear up and be prepared to fight back. Furthermore, they lacked shipmen.

When Xu Ting charged towards them, he saw them scrambling to start up the ship. He could not help but laugh as he saw many of them running away and also those who were having difficulty hoisting the sails.

Ultimately, they were thieves against officials, the circumstances were against them. Naturally, their first reaction was to run.

Those who really fought back without hesitation were truly stupid or ready to die.

"Seize their ships! Even if they sink, do not leave them with any!"

Xu Ting wanted to capture them all in one fell swoop and immediately commanded.

"Spearguns... fire!"

A loud boom could be heard as the warship began to roar.

The spearguns were actually crossbows mounted on the ship that shot explosive spears.

"Boom!"

On the opposite side, the spear hit the wooden ship and pierced through a few pirates. Blood spewed everywhere as shrieks of terror could be heard.

"Boom!"

Another official vessel launched another spear. This time, it was slightly off and pierced through the sail, leaving behind a huge hole.

"Truth be told, this kind of speargun can only be used to scare off the opponents. It couldn't even hit a still boat accurately! What if we were on rough seas?"

Xu Ting shook his head at that sight, "Let's not even mention those crossbows or what not, they can't even be used for long. With such dampness and humidity, they would be obsolete after a while..."

He was naturally talented in the battlefield. This time, not only was he collected in commanding, he even had the leisure to think about his own weaknesses.

"Charge!"

Once the ship reached the pier, the soldiers were prepared to jump down the official ship.

As their ship was huge, the deck was high above the ground and gave a dominant vantage point.

"Archers!" a sergeant hollered.

Twenty-something archers then drew their bow and shot at the armed pirates on their deck.

Fully armed soldiers then seized the opportunity and began jumping down the ship to fight.

"Those damned government troops are here, those who don't want their whole family to die, fight with them!"

Amongst the pirates, the very brave ones slashed forward with their swords.

"Form up and stab!"

The soldiers formed up, launched their spears together and the pirates turned into a bloody mess.

"Even with courage, this is all that is left..."

Xu Ting curled his lips as he looked at the scene.

These pirates' equipment were no match for the soldiers. Some of them were like beggars who used wooden spears.

Most importantly, many of them suffered from hunger and were skinny to the bones.

They could only rely on weapons with no gunpowder, and furthermore, they did not even have enough to eat, how would they have the energy to kill their enemies?

Hence, through the ages, none of the refugees who rebelled ever succeeded.

As Xu Ting silently made up his mind, he was no longer

undecided on what would be the outcome of these pirates.

Chapter 298: The Pacification

"Kill them all!"

The soldiers assumed their positions in groups of 5 and complemented each other. Furthermore, with their leather armour for protection, they were able to cut through the defence easily.

A large group of pirates were immediately killed, their fresh blood staining the floorboards. Some of them panicked and jumped into the water to escape.

When the second ship fell into the hands of the soldiers, a leader of the pirates immediately shouted. "Things are not looking good! Let's go...retreat and fortify the stockade village!"

He had a well-built figure with a booming voice and his skills were not too shoddy. With a swing of his sword, he sliced through a soldier's leather armour, causing the soldier to scream as his arm was severed.

"The two of you, kill him!"

Upon witnessing the scene, Xu Ting ordered his two bodyguards behind him without a moment of hesitation.

"Understood!"

The bodyguards replied before rushing forward, their faces bearing cruel smiles as they swung the Hundred Refined Goose Plume Swords. "Die!"

"Crack!"

The leader of the pirates raised his sword to parry. The two swords clashed and sparks flew.

A wave of power surged forth which caused him to retreat as his arms turned numb. He felt as though his sword was going to fly out from his hand and his expression changed. "This is... an elite

troop!"

He could not comprehend the situation. These bodyguards, who could easily take on 10 people at once, were assigned only to generals. Why would they appear in this area to defeat a few pirates?

However, he could think no further.

The two bodyguards were well coordinated. One of them met the leader head-on while the other advanced slowly as he waited for the opportunity to strike. With a sudden lunge and a flash of steel, the other bodyguard buried his sword into the waist of the leader which caused fresh blood to gush out from the waist of the leader.

With a cold laugh, the bodyguard severed the head of the leader with a stroke of his sword.

"This is a military warfare. Only a fool will play by your rules!"

In a military warfare, everything was fair play as long as the objective was met. So what if there was a small loss of reputation by using a sneak attack to kill the enemy?

It would truly be a joke if they were to talk about rules of the brave and the chivalrous with honour!

"It is almost done!"

When he saw the last will to rebel crushed, Xu Ting revealed a smile and nodded his head.

"Listen well, your leader is dead! Why are you all not surrendering?"

A bodyguard raised the severed head of the leader and hollered, "If you all still go against the soldiers of the imperial court, your whole family will be executed!"

"Sir, please spare our lives, we are willing to surrender!"

It was natural for the soldiers to capture the bandits. With the leaders gone, the remaining pirates did not have much will to

fight. They threw down their weapons and knelt down to surrender.

"Good! Prepare the ship, rope in the captives and account for the weapons and the injured..."

As he looked at the archers slowly killing off the pirates who jumped into the water to escape and a large group of pirates being held captive, Xu Ting gave the orders as his heart was filled with joy.

Not long after, the results were back.

"My lord, this time, we have killed 37 people and captured 50 people. The military power of the Heiguan Island has been wiped out..."

A sergeant reported, his face full of joy.

"My lord, I have located the stockade village. Those pirates that escaped previously have gathered within the village. It looks like they are trying to defend there..."

The Daoist priest came forward and spoke.

There was no real solution. Afterall, no troops would stay for long for just for a small stockade village. Once there were no real benefits left, the troops would withdraw.

"Oh!"

Xu Ting did not speak for a while. Instead, he stood on the floorboard and looked at the lake water that was stained red. There was a corpse floating in it with an arrow lodged in the body. He asked, "How many of our men were wounded or killed?"

"3 people were killed while 5 people were heavily wounded. There were others who had sustain light injuries. They would not affect the operation as they would be able to join in after they are patched up!"

As he was the son of an official, the troops were highly skilled

and there was an experienced doctor who saved the lives once at the battle ground, the troops were in high morale.

"They have already discovered us. Do we attack?"

No matter how short and poorly constructed the walls and the ditches were, the offensive side would suffer great loss should they attack the fortified area.

"Why bother, this battle is already over!"

Xu Ting tied up the pirates and laughed.

After a simple interrogation and multiple reports, they discovered that there were around 600 to 700 people left in the village, with most of them being the elderly, women or young children. The leader, Lu Jia was there as well.

Furthermore, the leader of the pirates who was previously beheaded was the second-in-command of Heiguan Island. He was naturally courageous. Of course, he was reduced to a severed head as a token of his bravery.

After hearing the reports, Xu Ting ordered the troops to reorganize and rest. He left around 20 people to guard the pier while he brought the remaining troops and captives before the stockade village.

At that moment, the village was in an uproar. Women and the elderlies could be seen standing atop the wall with worried looks upon their faces.

Afterall, Xu Ting's troops were from the army and as such, represented a sense of righteousness.

Furthermore, they have previously defeated the pirates and killed off many of them.

"Lu Jia is indeed a talent!"

Xu Ting came forward and took a look at the village. The walls were not very high. They were slightly over 3 metres and were

dilapidated. Before the village, there was a ditch. Although it was freshly dug and unfinished, it was sufficient to serve its purpose.

With these, if the troops were to assault the village, they would have to pay a certain price.

"It's a shame...he had lost his opportunity!"

If the elite of the pirates were still guarding the village, a hundred ordinary imperial soldiers would not be able to occupy the village.

Even if Xu Ting were to order his bodyguards to spearhead the assault, the losses would still be great. Once there were discontent amongst the ranks, he would have to massacre the entire village to pacify the soldiers. By then, he would not be able to conscript the pirates.

However, the family members of these villagers were in his hands. As such, he had a trump card which gave him an advantage.

"Sir, do we attack?"

His assistant came forward and asked as he witness the last remaining military power of the valiant pirates that came to the wall. There were only slightly more than a dozen pirates left.

The officer's 5 bodyguards were highly skilled and were able to kill off the leader quickly. By doing so, the stand-off would come to an end.

"Why bother risking our troops?"

Xu Ting waved his hand. "Bring out the captives! Advise the village to surrender. Tell them...if they do not surrender, I will use the captives to fill the ditches!"

"Sss..."

The officer pondered awhile before he let out his breath. He felt a chill in his heart before he praised Xu Ting. "You are indeed wise. The pirates will have no choice but to surrender!"

It was simply human nature. How many would act against their loved ones?

Even Lu Jia could not afford to make this mistake as it would incur the fury of the masses! Truth be told, his fate was sealed when the pier was attacked and the route of escape was cut off.

This was a calculated victory!

The officer might not be old, but he was well-versed in the arts of war. As such, he was an asset to Xu Ting.

The assistant pondered silently as he came up with a certain idea.

...

After the demand was made, there was more disturbance within the stockade. Shortly after, the door creaked open, revealing a dozen people carrying chaste berries. Upon seeing Xu Ting, they immediately knelt down. "Greetings!"

"Hmmmm, get up!"

Xu Ting looked at the leader of the pirates of Heiguan Island.

He was only around 30 years old. However, he looked weather-beaten and his hair had started to turn white.

Xu Ting knew that the person before him was unwilling, but what else could Liu Jia do? He could not afford to offend the villagers and be labelled as a betrayer. As such, there was nothing he could do but to surrender.

Of course, saving his own skin was most crucial!

Afterall, based on how the imperial courts handled the pirates in the past, there was faith that only the leader of the pirates would be executed while the other pirates were relocated.

The hair on Lu Jia's back stood up as he rose uneasily and looked towards the surrounding fierce soldiers.

"You gathered a group of pirates and broke the law. You even

looted a district town and robbed a large family. Your crime is unpardonable...."

Xu Ting carried on. His light tone caused Lu Jia's legs to tremble as he knelt down once more. "My lord, please spare my life! Please spare my life! I am only trying to make a living...food on the island is scarce and many had died of hunger..."

"Thud Thud!"

Not long after, Lu Jia's forehead was red with blood.

Xu Ting was satisfied upon witnessing this scene. "...however, I empathise with you. As such, I am willing to remove your records if you enlist in my army and eradicate the other pirates!"

Lu Jia was very capable and was of use to Xu Ting. However, he required more training to correct his boorish character.

As for how to make use of Lu Jia, Xu Ting had already made up his mind.

"Thank you my lord! Thank you!"

Even though the person standing in front of him was just a youth, Lu Jia still repeatedly thank him.

"Hmmm, Guo Kuixing, bring along 50 people to inspect the stockade and sort out the register..."

Although Xu Ting knew that there would not be much resistance, he could not set his mind at ease and as such, ordered his subordinates to enter the village with the captives.

He only managed to smile after all the families were brought out and the stocks accounted for.

He ordered the soldiers to start cooking in a huge pot, putting in wild herbs, sausages and the likes. They also added in a few salted fish to form a mixed porridge. The porridge were distributed and the soldiers took turn to eat and rest.

The disturbance within the families started to die out as they

received a portion of the food as well.

While the others were resting, Xu Ting was kept busy to the point where he did not even have the time to drink water. He listened to Guo Kuixing's report of the stock. "We have captured around 750 people, 70 swords, spears and other types of weapons, 3 sets of leather armour, 500 taels of gold and silver, and a few chests of copper coins...However, there are very little ration. Medicine and cloth are lacking as well!"

"Hmm, all those male pirates above the age of 15 shall be conscripted into the army and sternly looked after. Group the rest of the families into 5 families per group for mutual monitoring. Punish those who try to flee!"

Xu Ting walked a few steps before he spoke. "After you all are done with your meal, board the ship and burn down this stockade village!"

"As for the soldiers, reward them immediately. Those who took part in the battle would be rewarded with 1 silver tael. Those who kill the leaders of pirates will be awarded 10 silver taels. The reward for the main leader is calculated separately...I will not forget the officers who commanded the troops as well."

"My lord, you are wise indeed!"

Guo Kuixing and the other officers were joyous upon hearing the news.

Xu Ting could only laugh bitterly to himself.

Truth be told, there were more losses than gains as the troops had to consume a lot of resources to launch an attack on this small island.

'They do not know that the real rewards are these captives!'

Xu Ting looked at the hundreds of captives, his face revealing a bright smile.

Chapter 299: Evildoer

Half a month later, Quicksand Island.

A stockaded village was on fire and thick clouds of black smoke billowed towards the skies.

Xu Ting gazed at the refugees under his charge and singled out the strong men before rearranging them into new groups. He was satisfied with how it all went smoothly.

With Lu Jia, the spy, by his side, Xu Ting led a sweeping operation across the surrounding islands. There was an overwhelming amount of gold and silver. Most importantly, the ex-pirates of Heiguan Island clashed with members of their old brethren in a bid to prove their new loyalties.

To date, the refugees numbered 2,000 with more than 300 able-bodied men among them.

These men were not in the best of shapes but they were fearless. With enough food and the right amount of training, they could become a formidable force.

Also, having killed a few rebellious refugee leaders, Xu Ting had managed to inspire fear among the men. They would not cause any trouble for now.

"My lord..."

Guo Kuixing stood behind him and spoke gingerly.

"My lord is merciful for sparing the refugees. But we do not have enough supplies to support all of them!"

"I know!"

Xu Ting nodded to himself. He understood that things had reached a limit.

It was indeed a large burden for the Golden Lake Prefecture to support thousands more.

Besides, the goods offered by Lu Jia and his surrendered band of pirate leaders were running out too.

The pirate headquarters was a location of utmost importance. The pirates would not give it up so easily.

Also, the pirates might relocate their headquarters if they receive news of the army invasion. This would make things even more troublesome.

"This operation to wipe out the pirates of the Golden Court Lake might be tedious, but I see it as an opportunity to train my soldiers!"

Xu Ting was exhausted but there was fire in his eyes.

"I am the only commander in this vast lake. I call the shots. I get to decide who lives and who dies....when the purge is complete, my reputation will reach new heights."

Of course, at this point, both the men and equipment were at their breaking points. They all needed rest.

Thus, Xu Ting spoke to his second-in-command.

"Don't worry, I understand the gravity of the situation. Tell the boats to retreat!"

Xu Ting's forces had seized many boats and he had to send them in batches, but the distance they had to travel was not too far. It was all manageable.

Xu Ting noticed that his subordinates still looked worried.

"...Father promised me that he would give us land, housing and supplies. I think it will be enough to help all these people settle down!"

Having heard that the arrangements had received the blessings of the Prefecture Minister, the men were somewhat assuaged.

Who knew that Xu Ting was, in fact, laughing coldly to himself. The families of the surrendered pirates were going to be hostages.

He would never have to worry about them going against him.

This military operation had given him a better understanding of the situation. He had also become more well-versed in naval warfare.

The next time, he would definitely put in more effort and request for reinforcements from his clan. He would have to win a watershed victory and gain unparalleled influence in the area!

"Time waits for no man indeed..."

Xu Ting gave a deep sigh and gazed at the setting sun.

...

In the capital city of Da Chu.

An imperial manor.

This was not a prince's manor, but its gates were large and imposing, its gardens vast and deep. Guards patrolled the manor grounds in a solemn manner. It was comparable to any of the princes' manors.

In the whole of Da Chu, only one clan wielded such power. It was the family of the Prime Minister of Chu, Wang Qiao.

Wang Qiao was born to a prominent clan and was bright from a young age. He had joined the civil service as a junior official and in the span of 20 years, rose to his position as the premier official.

The late emperor had been a despot who immersed himself in wine and woman. He had died at a relatively young age, and Wang Qiao became the regent for his successor.

Wang Qiao dropped his image as a loyal subject when he ascended to the regency and had built up a court faction loyal to himself. He had also colluded with the corrupt eunuchs and ladies of the harem so as to secure his grip on power.

At the beginning of the year, the royal court had decreed that Wang Qiao was exempt from the full rites of greeting the emperor

and could carry a sword to court. This was an exceptional privilege and was a testament to his unparalleled influence.

"Haha...drink up beauty!"

In the back garden, a band was playing a soothing melody. A lady with skin as fair as white jade and a slim waist was performing a song and dance. It was a very precious sight indeed.

She was draped in only translucent silk, which accentuated her perfect figure. Her features conveyed various expressions of love and longing. Even the serving ladies standing around were intoxicated.

Wang Qiao sat in the prime seat and raised a wine cup.

He looked to be in his fifties and had a graceful and unusual aura about him. His eyes were lit up as he watched the performance.

"Thank you, My Lord!"

The beauty stepped forward elegantly and received the cup with her slender fingers. She then drained the cup in a swift movement. Some of the wine escaped her lips and formed a titillating streak by her mouth.

Wang Qiao was enthralled.

"My life becomes much more colourful with such a beauty like you by my side, Beauty She!"

Wang Qiao was about to continue with his frivolous activities when his housekeeper rushed in.

"My lord!"

Seeing that Wang Qiao's expression had turned unpleasant, the housekeeper fell to the floor in a hurry.

"Sorry for dampening your spirits, My Lord, but there is something very important that I need to report!"

The housekeeper produced a written report.

As Wang Qiao read it, his face turned a turbulent shade and he slammed a fist on the table.

"How dare this Imperial Censor!"

The Imperial Censors had supervisory roles and could report directly to the emperor. The role was officially not a high-ranking one, but in truth, the Imperial Censors had much authority.

This particular Imperial Censor was named Hai Qing and had submitted a report detailing the eight major crimes of Wang Qiao. The accusations were very well substantiated and Wang Qiao was actually afraid. His fear quickly turned into rage.

However, the report would never reach the emperor because Wang Qiao had intercepted it.

Wang Qiao was angry indeed and he thirsted for blood.

Wang Qiao might not be a king, but his wrath was a thing to behold. The servants all fell to the ground and prostrated before him. Even Beauty She was trembling.

"Hehe...Hai Qing? An eloquent writer indeed!"

As Wang Qiao calmed himself down, he broke out into a laugh.

"Men, send my personal guards to detain him and throw him into prison. Cut out his ligaments and tear out his tongue..."

"My Lord!"

The housekeeper was shaken. He was a loyal and fairly capable adviser to Wang Qiao and spoke up.

"Throughout history, the Imperial Censors have never been punished for their reports. If you want to deal with him, you should grant him another appointment and relocate him so that he will no longer enjoy the immunity of his position. When the time comes, you can deal with him any way you want!"

"You have a point, but am I to listen to you?"

Wang Qiao knew that his previous order was an impulsive one and he had intended to correct it. However, hearing the housekeeper offer him the exact plan he had in mind, and being under the gaze of the various ladies surrounding him, he was not about to back down.

The housekeeper broke out into a cold sweat.

"No My Lord! I will carry out your orders!"

'This housekeeper thinks that I will tolerate his insolence just because he is old...'

As he watched the housekeeper retreat into the distance, an idea came into Wang Qiao's mind.

'I could use take this chance to test the waters. I want to know how many would dare to cross me!"

In Fang Yuan's previous life, there was the famous Zhao Gao incident of fact distortion. Throughout history, the strategies of power consolidation remained largely similar to each other. Wang Qiao was planning to use an old trick from the book as well.

After receiving the report, Wang Qiao was no longer in the mood for merrymaking, and he retired to his study.

The musicians had already disbanded and went their separate ways, but Beauty She continued to stroll in the garden. Before long, she arrived at the edge of a lonely bamboo forest.

There was a pavilion made entirely out of bamboo stalks. The workmanship was extremely fine and the pavilion remained cool even with the heat of summer.

However, at this point, the pavilion was cold, and there was no one else in the surrounding area.

Beauty She talked to the air. Her behaviour was secretive.

"You are bold to sneak in here...are you not afraid of the repercussions from people dao and fate energy?"

A soft ghostly voice broke out from nowhere.

"Hehe...Wang Qiao is an unscrupulous person who is running out of luck. Why would I be afraid of him?"

Beauty She laughed when she heard the reply.

"What a stubborn person. If you are not afraid, why don't you reveal yourself?"

The presence in the air was silent for a moment.

"The rise of people dao is a major development. The holy beings of the demon race are beginning to understand the thread of thought...this is why you demons can reincarnate at the cost of their powers and longevity, and infiltrate the countries of men. This is to bring about the fall of humanity and prevent them from taking up the heaven's mandate."

"The previous mission involving the late emperor was a job well done. What about Wang Qiao this time?"

Beauty She replied with a serious look.

"For the sake of the demon race, I am willing to do anything. Wang Qiao is obsessed with wine and women. I think he will end up like the late emperor...it's funny how he isn't content with me alone and went to hook up with the empress...her race is well known for their cosmetics skills and even I am in awe of it!"

"Excellent, but he is still useful and you should keep him alive for now..."

The voice in thin air continued to speak.

"Now we should focus our efforts on goading Wang Qiao to usurp the throne. This would definitely trigger a huge civil war in Chu and lead to the destruction of humanity!!"

"Yes, I know!"

There was a shudder in the air, and the presence was gone. Beauty She sighed in relief.

These days, heaven's will had become more obvious.

The tribulations of the demon race had increased, and the thunderclaps from the skies had grown more powerful. A band of gods from people dao and some traitorous demons were in collusion. It was a difficult time.

The holy beings of the demon race had tried to read the fates and decided that it was unwise to go against them. Resistance was futile. Thus, the beings had come up with this plan to create internal conflict and destroy humanity from within.

When demons reincarnated, they could become human. However, this came at the cost of half their cultivation and they would lose their demonic magic. Their longevity would also suffer.

To achieve their goals and hide from their destiny, even the holy beings from the demon race had sacrificed much of their cultivation.

This was the true master plan of the demon race. Not only in Chu, but Qi and Liang as well!

Chapter 300: Map Delivery

Before a nation perishes, there were bound to be omens!

Beauty She twisted a piece of bamboo leaf and thought to herself, "The late emperor could have lived for ten plus years more but he got ruined by Sister Dowager. Now, the minister Wang Qiao has too become a puppet of us demons. It is not hard for an internal conflict to happen in Da Chu..."

However, she had some doubts.

After paying such a huge price, many amongst the demons were still too worried and were preparing to have two strings to one's bow.

Other than the current land, the demons were already searching for new islands and lands in the vast seas. They were preparing to sow a batch of seeds of the demons on these new lands to preserve their elemental energy.

One obvious plan and one clandestine plan, this was how the demons planned to strike back.

As for those demons who harmed humans, they were merely defeatists who have given up.

"The heavenly trend cannot be opposed!"

As Beauty She thought of how despondently the Saint said that with a tinge of savagery, she unknowingly felt her heart became heavier.

"My demon race has dominated for centuries! Used to and still is! The world will still be in our hands in the future!"

"Provoking massive outbreaks of chaos is to eradicate all the brilliant human minds, whenever a human rise up, we will suppress him. All in all, we must stir internal conflict amongst the humans and cause them to deplete their own elemental energy!"

Beauty She's expression turned cold and her eyes sparkled with a blue-green essence, "Mere humans, how dare they vie for the throne of master of all races!"

Moments later, she stood up and left, leaving behind two evenly dissected pieces of bamboo leaves that were slowly falling.

...

At the Pier in Black Lake District.

"Sir, latest intelligence from the capital!"

Xu Ting had only rested for less than half a day before he got interrupted. After reading a few lines of the letter, an uneasy look appeared on his face.

"Minister plans to rebel!"

Although it was a few simple words, it was utterly shocking for Xu Ting.

"Initially, I thought troubled times were ahead of us, looks like I am already in a troubled world now..."

Xu Ting gave a wry smile, with his intellect, he could already predict the chain of events that would happen thereafter.

"I thought I was fast enough, I guess I'm too slow now! Way too slow!"

Once Wang Qiao usurped the throne, he could make use of clearing rebels as a reason to eradicate anyone he deemed disloyal to him and the burden of righteousness could literally be thrown aside.

With how smoothly things went, Xu Ting felt as though he was in a dream.

"There's no problem with Golden Lake Prefecture, however, there is more than one prefecture around Golden Court Lake! For our family to rise, we still require more strength and we have to continue with capturing the pirates, but however, at a much faster

pace!"

He gritted his teeth, "We have to continue with the plans of hiding troops in the lake, just that..."

Even though he had the support of his family, it was demanding to support thousands of people. Furthermore, the supply of troops ahead of him was never-ending.

Also, it was too conspicuous to have it carried out in Golden Lake Prefecture.

"I definitely have to look for a more suitable place to allocate the remaining big group of troops..., the leaders of the pirates and their family members definitely have to be placed ashore to control them with ease, while the rest do not have to and can be placed in the lake, in the lake..., in the lake...."

Xu Ting tugged his hair in frustration.

He finally understood that no matter how good a plan was, once executed, numerous unexpected issues would arise. Such situations tested the abilities of commanders.

"Small islands in the lake are too scattered! If they were so spread out, how could I rule them together?"

Xu Ting pondered.

In order to hide the troops in the lake, the most crucial problem to solve was where would the base be.

If they were to use those larger islands, it would be easily discovered by the fishermen who fish in the lake daily and also the numerous pirates in the area.

Unless...

"Sir!"

As he was deep in thoughts and scribbled on his desk, time past unknowingly and it was already dark outside.

A lovely maid carrying an oil lamp and meal boxes came forward.

"Luan'er?"

Xu Ting's gaze softened as he saw her, "What brought you over personally?"

"I was told to specially come take care of you since you worked so hard on eradicating the pirates!"

Li Luan lit up the room, opened the meal boxes and laid out the dishes. There was a plate of roast chicken, a plate of drool-inducing braised pork leg, two plates vegetables and one bottle of wine. They were all Xu Ting's favourites.

"Haha, Luan'er knows me the best!"

After receiving a pair of chopsticks from Li Luan, Xu Ting took a bite and sang praises immediately, "Your skills have improved... I better eat more today! Eh, how come there's no fish?"

On the shores of Golden Court Lake, fish was the most common dish.

Since he started eradicating the pirates, he seized countless dried fish. Hence, he asked curiously.

"Fish..."

Li Luan smiled unconvincingly, "Sir, you wanted fish?"

"No! I'm already of sick of it..."

Xu Ting seemed like he remembered something and shook his hands.

In spite of that, Li Luan's face was still pale, it was as though dark clouds were looming over her.

As a thoughtful person, Xu Ting immediately realised the change in atmosphere. "Do you have something that is troubling you...?"

"Indeed!"

Li Luan pulled herself together. "Sir, do you still remember the

person who visited your father?"

"I do!"

The plan to hide the troops in the lake was given by that young man. It left such a strong impression on him, how could he not remember?

After further investigations, that man was apparently Black Dragon General, a people dao deity. It was truly inconceivable, and naturally, the misunderstandings dispelled.

However, when Xu Ting heard Li Luan mentioned him again, he felt slightly uncomfortable. "What is the matter?"

Li Luan answered, "He met your father again and delivered this map!"

She took out a scroll and slowly unravelled it.

"Eh..."

Looking at the contents of the scroll, Xu Ting's eyes opened wide. "This is.... the water map?"

Having fought with the pirates for so many days, he studied the water map daily and naturally, he could recognise it, "Not only is this a simple water map, it encompassed the whole Golden Court Lake, such detail..."

Beside him, Li Luan silently heaved a sigh of relief as he saw the sparkle in Xu Ting's eyes.

The map had great utility, furthermore the fact that they could have it meant that Fang Yuan had the support of Golden Court Dragon God. Such rapid progress was shocking.

However, compared to Fang Yuan, Xu Ting was...

At that moment, Li Luan was gratified as he saw how contented Xu Ting was, she then added, "Sir, not only that... look!"

She lightly caressed the water map and a layer of vapour

appeared. It was as though the map came to life.

Sparkling red dots appeared on the map; they could be seen clearly on the map moving.

"These are the pirates' hideouts, the brighter the red dot, the more powerful they are..." Li Luan explained.

"This is... a valuable treasure!"

Xu Ting stood up, his face beamed with joy.

With this map, it was akin to having the entire Golden Court Lake! With the help of the deity!

"Such valuable treasure could only be made by Golden Court Dragon God. Congratulations Sir!"

Li Luan then pointed at the map and continued, "There's a big island here, we can reclaim 5,000 acres of farmland there! There's also a deep-water harbour for us to build a pier. It is a great location to place our base in!"

"This place..."

Xu Ting was puzzled and looked carefully, there was indeed an island. He then asked, "Why hasn't it been discovered?"

"Because there are a lot of undercurrents and whirlpools nearby which makes it difficult for ships to traverse through. However, there's a safe route on the map..."

As Li Luan explained, in her heart, she was clear of something.

The island was actually inhabited by water dwellers.

Although many of the water dwellers lived inside the waters, on special occasions, they would come up on land to mate.

On the whole Golden Court Lake, there were a few of such islands which were all forbidden land for humans.

However, for Xu Ting's sake, one of the islands was cleared out.

In his heart, Xu Ting was even more in awe of the heavenly trend

and Fang Yuan's power.

"Such a valuable treasure... what a valuable treasure..."

Xu Ting felt slightly uneasy as he held the scroll. However, his hands were still tight. He then enquired, "Then how did Black Dragon General got hold of it? Was he tasked by the Dragon God?"

"I do not know if he was tasked by the Dragon God or not. However, I am sure the Dragon God is on our side. We should provide some offerings!" Li Luan reminded.

"Hmm... that's true!"

Xu Ting nodded his head. This time, with the help of the deity, his wishes came true and it made him feel as though fate was in his favour.

...

Outside the prefecture, Fang Yuan suddenly smiled as he was looking at the scenery. "With the support of the Dragon God, Xu Ting's strength has multiplied... looks like there wouldn't be any more problems with uniting the pirates of Golden Court Lake."

In reality, it was a win-win situation.

With the Dragon God's backing, it was natural to return the favour by multitudes once they succeeded.

Most importantly, it was for Xu Ting reach that level of success where he could return the favour.

Fang Yuan opened the bottle gourd on his waist and drank the dragon palace's rare spiritual wine. As he drank and gazed at the sky, he felt awe-inspiring.

At that moment, as soon as Xu Ting got the information, Fang Yuan naturally got it too.

"A minister trying to usurp, what a coincidental timing! When the nations are in chaos, the demons would definitely interfere and add fuel to the oil, causing the humans to be in a perpetual internal

conflict!"

Although he did not know that there were already demons causing chaos in the nation, he could easily guess it as it was obvious for them to attack their enemies at such timings.

As he saw Li Luan fell deeper and deeper, Fang Yuan had an even greater understanding and fear of this realm's heavenly trend.

"The heavens make a fool of people, such a phrase is indeed true... even if Li Luan wholeheartedly wanted to support the Dragon God, she would inevitably be deluded and the outcome would be unpredictable..."

"If that could happen to her, what about those demons who hated the humans to the core?"

Even though there were techniques to pry into heavenly secrets in this realm, most of the results were muddled or gave partial revelations that misled people.

"Some of the demons were too smart for their own good!"

"After all, the uprising of humans was the heavenly trend, there is no place for demons to rule!"

Fang Yuan chose not to be too close to the Xu family due to that exact reason.

Even for the delivery of the water map, Fang Yuan had made use of Li Luan as a middleman to let her benefit, just for the sake of maintaining distance from them. By maintaining a distance from the Xu family, if the situation were to turn awry in the future, he could cut ties with them quickly.

The heavenly trend was hard to predict! One could only tread as though he was on thin ice and be on guard against the unknown at all times!

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